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# **NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL**

**MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA**

## **THESIS**

**WHY INSURGENTS FAIL:  
EXAMINING POST-WORLD WAR II FAILED  
INSURGENCIES UTILIZING THE PREREQUISITES OF  
SUCCESSFUL INSURGENCIES AS A FRAMEWORK**

by

Frank H. Zimmerman

March 2007

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**WHY INSURGENTS FAIL:  
EXAMINING POST-WORLD WAR II FAILED INSURGENCIES UTILIZING  
THE PREREQUISITES OF SUCCESSFUL INSURGENCIES AS A  
FRAMEWORK.**

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requirements for the degree of

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from the

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## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis identifies five common characteristics of successful post-World War II insurgencies: (1) a cause to fight for, (2) local populace support, (3) weakness in the authority, (4) favorable geographic conditions, and (5) external support during the middle and later stages of an insurgency. This list of characteristics is incomplete for current and future insurgencies and a sixth characteristic, (6) an information advantage, is necessary. For this study, 72 post-World War II insurgencies are identified, of which 11 are classified as failed insurgencies. Of these 11 failed insurgencies, 6 were selected for analysis using the above 6 characteristics of an insurgency in order to determine any trends in their failure. The 6 selected failed insurgencies are: Greek Civil War, Philippines (Huk), Malayan Emergency, Kenya Emergency, Dhofar Rebellion, and Bolivia. This research determined that no one characteristic stands out as the key for defeating an insurgency. Counterinsurgent forces must consider and take into account all 6 characteristics and plan accordingly. It is further determined that 3 of the characteristics: local populace support, external support, and information advantage, must be reduced to a significant disadvantage for an insurgency in order for an insurgency to fail.



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# **I. INTRODUCTION**

## **A. PURPOSE OF THESIS**

The purpose of this thesis is to determine whether historical analysis of post-World War II failed insurgencies identifies common characteristics that can be exploited to promote failure in future insurgencies. Most studies of insurgencies have focused primarily on counterinsurgency efforts, rather than on the characteristics of the insurgency itself. Furthermore these studies, to date, have focused most attention on why insurgencies succeed. However, there has been limited research into why others fail. Dietrich Dorner wrote in his book, *The Logic of Failure*, that “when we fail to solve a problem, we fail because we tend to make a small mistake here, a small mistake there, and these mistakes add up.”<sup>1</sup> The complex problem of insurgency must be approached in a systematic fashion in order to identify these small mistakes which could then be exploited when developing a counterinsurgency campaign plan for combating future insurgencies. According to Dorner,

Failure does not strike like a bolt from the blue; it develops gradually according to its own logic. As we watch individuals attempt to solve problems, we will see that complicated situations seem to elicit habits of thought that set failure in motion from the beginning. From that point, the continuing complexity of the task and the growing apprehension of failure encourage methods of decision making that make failure even more likely and then inevitable.<sup>2</sup>

Learning from the mistakes made by leaders and forces of past failed insurgencies, counterinsurgency forces may be able to develop strategies that take advantage of mistakes in current and future insurgencies. By exploiting these mistakes counterinsurgent forces could promote failure in modern insurgencies.

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<sup>1</sup> Dietrich Dorner, *The Logic of Failure: Recognizing and Avoiding Error in Complex Situations*, New York: A Merloyd Lawrence Book, 1997, 7.

<sup>2</sup> Dorner, *The Logic of Failure*, 10.

## B. RELEVANCY

Strategists Steven Metz and Raymond Millen have observed that “insurgency has existed throughout history but ebbed and flowed in strategic significance.”<sup>3</sup> In the post-World War II era, the most pervasive form of conflict worldwide has been on the lower end of the conflict spectrum. These conflicts have primarily taken the form of insurgencies, guerrilla warfare, and small scale contingencies. As explained in the U.S. Army’s newest counterinsurgency manual, in order to

succeed against superior resources and technology, weaker actors have had to adapt. The recent success of U.S. military forces in major combat operations undoubtedly will lead many future opponents to pursue asymmetric approaches...Today the world has entered another period when insurgency is common and strategically significant. This is likely to continue for at least a decade, perhaps longer<sup>4</sup>

Addressing the graduating class of United States Military Academy at West Point in 1962, President John F. Kennedy emphasized the point that insurgency is different than any other type of conflict and would require the development of new tactics, doctrine, and training methodology:

This is another type of war, new in its intensity, ancient in its origins--war by guerrillas, subversives, insurgents, assassins; war by ambush instead of by combat; by infiltration, instead of aggression, seeking victory by eroding and exhausting the enemy instead of engaging him. It requires in those situations where we must counter it a whole new kind of strategy, a wholly different kind of military training.<sup>5</sup>

There are numerous theories regarding why conflict has become more prevalent at the lower end of the conflict spectrum. These theories are based primarily on two common themes: (1) the changing attitudes of populaces, and (2) technological advances that have greatly enhanced the ability to influence large masses of people. In 1962, B.H. Liddell Hart recognized the impact of the changing attitudes of populaces on insurgencies

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<sup>3</sup> Steven Metz and Raymond Millen, *Insurgency and Counterinsurgency in the 21st Century: Reconceptualizing Threat and Response*, U.S. Army War College Strategic Studies Institute report (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, November 2004), vi.

<sup>4</sup> U. S. Department of the Army, *Field Manual 3-24, Counterinsurgency* (Washington D. C.: Government Printing Office, 15 December 2006), 1-2.

<sup>5</sup> Roger Hilsman, *To Move a Nation: The Politics of Foreign Policy in the Administration of John F. Kennedy* (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1967), 415.

and foreshadowed their struggle for legitimacy when he wrote, “campaigns of this kind are the more likely to continue because it is the only kind of war that fits the conditions of the modern age, while being at the same time well suited to take advantage of social discontent, racial ferment and nationalist fervours.”<sup>6</sup>

Since insurgents make up a small percentage of the populace and lack material advantage they cannot hope to successfully confront counterinsurgent forces in conventional warfare, especially during the initial stages of an insurgency. Technological advances have greatly enhanced the insurgent’s ability to communicate with and influence the populace. Insurgencies, therefore, have incorporated technology into new strategies to offset the counterinsurgent forces’ strengths. By doing this, insurgencies have been able to not only overcome the material advantage of the counterinsurgent forces, but in many cases to actually level the playing field. Insurgencies augmented by advancing technologies were a natural reaction for the weak against the strong. An insurgents’ continued inability to match the United States in conventional maneuver warfare makes it a certainty that the United States will confront insurgents in the future.

### **C. LITERATURE REVIEW**

The literature concerning insurgency and counterinsurgency operations is extensive in its critiques and prescriptions for individual insurgencies. Literature that has surveyed more than one insurgency at a time is, on the other hand, less common. Due to the nature of insurgencies, information will be drawn primarily from secondary sources. Primary sources will be utilized to the fullest extent, when available. Information is widely available from the counterinsurgent forces’ viewpoint. All efforts will be made to research and utilize sources from the insurgent’s viewpoint. In both cases, as an objective researcher, I will make all considerations for the inherent assumptions and bias of the authors.

Three seminal works on insurgency and counterinsurgency -- *Low Intensity Operations: Subversion, Insurgency, Peacekeeping* by Frank Kitson, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: The Theory and Practice* by David Galula, and *Counter-insurgency*

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<sup>6</sup> B.H. Liddell Hart, Forward to *Mao Tse Tung and Ché Guevara: On Guerilla Warfare* (Cassell, 1962), xi, (as cited in Frank Kitson, *Low Intensity Operations* [Harrisburg: Stackpole Books, 1971], 16).

*Operations: Techniques of Guerrilla Warfare* by Julian Paget proved to be essential sources for establishing the primary prerequisites for a successful insurgency.

The once obscure RAND report entitled *Counterinsurgency: A Symposium*, provided numerous insights and perspectives of several individuals who fought in Malaysia, Kenya, South Vietnam, Philippines, and Algeria. The RAND Corporation sponsored the five day symposium in April 1962. Participants included such famous counterinsurgency names as David Galula, Frank Kitson, and John Shirley. This work draws on the actual knowledge of personnel who have conducted counterinsurgency operations.

The Digital National Security Archive which contains 24 complete collections of primary documents central to US foreign and military policy since 1945 was an excellent source. The El Salvador, Philippines, and U.S. Intelligence Community, 1947-1989 collections provided many hard to find primary source documents.

### **1. Greek Civil War (1946-1949)**

In *The Greek Civil War 1944-1949* Edgar O'Ballance examines two essential questions: (1) What circumstances made each round of the civil war possible?, and (2) why did the insurgent forces fail?<sup>7</sup> *The Withered Vine: Logistics and the Communist Insurgency in Greece, 1945-1949* by Charles R. Shrader depends heavily on English language sources. Shrader's intent was not to break new ground on why the conflict occurred, but to conduct a detailed examination of the military aspect of the conflict. Shrader has also included a very extensive bibliography in his book. For a more nuanced interpretation of the Greek Civil War one must read David H. Close's book, *The Origins of the Greek Civil War*. This Australian historian has done a much better job of using both English and Greek sources in order to get a better understanding of the ideologies that drove the conflict. Good analysis and background information on the Greek Civil War was found in Charilaos G. Lagoudakis' chapter on the Greek Civil War in *Challenge and Response in Eternal Conflict*, and in Andrew R. Molnar's *Undergrounds in Insurgent, Revolutionary, and Resistance Warfare*.

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<sup>7</sup> Edgar O'Ballance. *The Greek Civil War 1944-49* (Great Britain: Frederick A. Praeger Publishers, 1966), 13.

## **2. Philippines (Huk Rebellion) (1946-1954)**

Insurgency sources include Luis Taruc's *Born of the People* and *He Who Rides the Tiger: The Story of an Asian Guerilla Fighter*. Good case studies of the Huk Rebellion include Lawrence M. Greenberg's *Hukbalahap Insurrection: A Case Study of a Successful Anti-Insurgency Operation in the Philippines – 1946-1954*, Robert R. Smith's "The Philippines (1946-1954)" in *Challenge and Response in Internal Conflict Volume I The Experience in Asia*, and Andrew R. Molnar's "Philippines (1946-1954)" in *Undergrounds in Insurgent, Revolutionary, and Resistance Warfare*. A good perspective on the point of view of the participants and supporters of the Huk movement is provided by Benedict J. Kerkvliet's *The Huk Rebellion: A Study of Peasant Revolt in the Philippines*.

## **3. Malayan Emergency (1948-1960)**

Julian Paget's "Emergency in Malaya" which is a chapter in Gerard Chaliand's *Guerrilla Strategies: An Historical Anthology from the Long March to Afghanistan* is the best organized and concise explanation of the Malayan Emergency. Robert W. Komer's, Rand Report, *The Malayan Emergency in Retrospect: Organization of a Successful Counterinsurgency Effort R-957-ARPA*, provides a very objective and thorough assessment of the Malayan Emergency. Komer also provides numerous useful insights for current counterinsurgency strategists. Franklin Mark Osanka has reproduced three interesting articles on the Malayan Emergency in *Modern Guerilla Warfare: Fighting Communist Guerrilla Movements, 1941-1961*. These three articles give the reader a definite feel for what the attitudes were at the beginning, middle, and end of the conflict. The first article by Paul M. A. Linebarger, "They Call 'em Bandits in Malaya," was written in January 1951 and gives the reader a good feel of why this war was initially called the Bandit War. The second article by Anthony Crockett, "Action in Malaya," was written in January 1955 and gives the reader an appreciation of the frustrations and challenges of being a member of the counterinsurgent force in 1955. The third article by James E. Dougherty, "The Guerrilla War in Malaya," was written in 1958 as the MCP was faltering and looking for the best terms possible. Andrew Molnar's "Malaya (1948-60)," in *Undergrounds in Insurgent, Revolutionary, and Resistance Warfare* and Bert H.

Cooper's "Malaya (1948-1960)," in *Challenge and Response in Internal Conflict, Volume I, The Experience in Asia* provided excellent overall analysis of the conflict.

#### **4. Kenya Emergency (1952-1960)**

For good analysis of the counterinsurgency effort see John A. McConnell's Master Thesis titled *The British in Kenya (1952-1960): Analysis of a Successful Counterinsurgency Campaign*, Anthon Clayton's *Counter-insurgency in Kenya 1952-60: A Study of Military Operations against the Mau-Mau*, and D. M. Condit's "Kenya (1952-1960)" in *Challenge and Response in Internal Conflict, Volume III The Experience in Africa and Latin America*. Frank Kitson's *Bunch of Five* provided valuable insights into the development and impact of pseudo-gangs on the Mau Mau organization. Good narratives on the conflict were provided by Michael Carver's *War Since 1945*, Robert B. Asprey's *War in the Shadows: The Guerrilla in History*, and Charles Allen's *The Savage Wars of Peace: Soldiers' Voices 1945-1989*. For analysis more focused on the Mau Mau see Wunyabari O. Maloba's *Mau Mau and Kenya: Analysis of a Peasant Revolt* and Fred Majdalany's *State of Emergency: The Full Story of Mau Mau*. Two texts that were not available but widely cited by all the above sources were L. S. B. Leakley's, *Defeating Mau Mau* and *Mau Mau and the Kikuyu*.

#### **5. Dhofar Rebellion (1962-1976)**

Detailed resources on the events of the Dhofar Rebellion are scarce. One must attribute this to the fact that this insurgency was primarily fought in an extremely remote location and received very little coverage outside of the Arabian Peninsula. Four sources were discovered that describe the conflict in varying degrees of detail: John Newsinger's, *British Counterinsurgency: From Palestine to Northern Ireland*, John Townsend's, *Oman: The Making of the Modern State*, Michael Dewar's, *Brush Fire Wars: Minor Campaigns of the British Army since 1945*, and Leroy Thompson's, *Ragged War: The Story of Unconventional and Counter-Revolutionary Warfare*.

#### **6. Bolivia (1966-1968)**

When reading literature on the failed insurgency in Bolivia, one must first read Ernesto "Ché" Guevara's, *Guerrilla Warfare*. This book is a manual for how he would execute a guerrilla campaign to overthrow a government. Since he wrote this how-to book on guerrilla warfare many years before his failed attempt in Bolivia, it is a useful

document for understanding how Guevara's mind worked, but leaves one wondering what he was thinking in Bolivia. Daniel James' book, *The Complete Bolivian Diaries of Ché Guevara and other Captured Documents*, is best described by counterinsurgency expert Frank Kitson when he wrote, "His Bolivian diary gives a day-to-day account of the disintegration of his force and is one of the most instructive documents available."<sup>8</sup> Henry B. Ryan's book, *The Fall of Ché Guevara* is a very detailed case study of the United States' involvement in Bolivia in 1966-76. It is focused on the United States' counterinsurgency response to the insurgency. Gary P. Salmon's book, *The Defeat of Ché Guevara: Military Response to Guerilla Challenge in Bolivia*, is a well documented account of the challenge in Bolivia presented by Guevara. It was Gary P. Salmon's company that captured Guevara. The book is a good synopsis of the events prior to, during, and after the defeat of Guevara. For good a good history of Bolivia in the context of revolution leading up to just prior to Guevara's attempt, read James M. Malloy's book, *Bolivia: The Uncompleted Revolution*. Richard Gott, a reporter in Bolivia for the Guardian in 1967, wrote the book *Guerrilla Movements in Latin America*. Written in a journalist style it provides a wealth of insight into the events that led to Guevara's capture and execution. Jon Lee Anderson's *Ché Guevara: A Revolutionary Life* is most likely the most comprehensive examination of Guevara's life. The book, *The Great Rebel: Ché Guevara in Bolivia*, by Luis J. Gonzalez and Gustavo A. Sanchez Salazar, has an extremely detailed appendix of the members of Guevara's insurgent force by nationality.

#### **D. METHODOLOGY**

A qualitative research approach was utilized for this thesis. This approach enabled the development of new perspectives about why insurgencies fail. The qualitative research design consists of six collective case studies using historical analysis.

The time period for this study was narrowed to the post-World War II era, 1945 to the present. Limiting this study of failed insurgencies to this time period was done for two reasons. The first reason was the fact that the most pervasive form of conflict worldwide in the post-World War II era has been on the lower end of the conflict spectrum. Though insurgencies prior to 1945 can offer numerous and valuable insights,

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<sup>8</sup> Kitson, *Low Intensity Operations*, 34.



the author of this study believes that post-World War II era failed insurgencies will prove more relevant in the current global environment. The second reason is due to the limitation of primary sources on pre-World War II era insurgencies. Initial research showed that records pertaining to pre-World War II era insurgencies were limited in both availability and accessibility. There were also indications that there would be severe limitations in the research due to linguistic complications and suspected potential historical bias in pre-World War II era primary and secondary sources. Though one could argue that these limitations could be overcome with additional resources, it was clearly beyond the time limitations of this study to conduct such a broad research project.

It is also necessary to discuss the limitations of this research. The author of this thesis has made every effort to maintain the perspective of the insurgent. This has proved difficult for several reasons. Typically when an insurgency fails there are no knowledgeable insurgent leaders left to write an unbiased and concise history from the insurgent's viewpoint. Historical analysis of insurgencies has almost exclusively been conducted from the viewpoint of the counterinsurgent. After all, in war the victor gets to write history; therefore, author bias must also be considered. As the scholar D.M. Condit has noted, "Winners tend to write more than losers." Furthermore, he posits that "the literature available in English has usually taken the point of view of the Western power rather than that of the indigenous government."<sup>9</sup>

The author has also made every attempt to not focus only on the military aspects of insurgency. Generally historical works examining insurgencies tend to be overly focused on the military aspects of both the insurgent and counterinsurgent forces.

The findings in this study are, to use Condit's phrase, "dependent on what has been written rather than upon what should have been written."<sup>10</sup> As one reviews the extended bibliography in Appendix B it becomes obvious that much more was written on some insurgencies than others. Also it is pointed out in the book, *A Counterinsurgency Bibliography*,

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<sup>9</sup> D. M. Condit et. al., *A Counterinsurgency Bibliography* (Washington D. C.: The American University, 1963), 10.

<sup>10</sup> Condit et. al., *A Counterinsurgency Bibliography*, 9.

much more has been written in English about counterinsurgency in which British or Americans were prime movers than about other experiences in which the counterinsurgents were not English speaking...Thus the quantity of available literature on counterinsurgency is not the same for every campaign, nor does it necessarily reflect the importance of the given experience.<sup>11</sup>

For this study, seventy-two post-World War II era insurgencies were identified. A complete list of these seventy-two insurgencies is available in Appendix A. Of these seventy-two insurgencies, eleven were identified as failed insurgencies and are listed in Figure 1 – “Failed Insurgencies.” A broad spectrum of failed insurgencies was sought in this study in order to obtain results that could be generally applied against modern insurgencies. This broad spectrum can be identified by three distinguishing features for these failed insurgencies: duration, type, and location.

<b>Insurgency</b>	<b>Duration</b>	<b>Primary Participants</b>
Greek Civil War <sup>a</sup>	1945-1949	Britain, then U.S. and the Government of Greece (GoG), vs. National Liberation Army (ELAS)
Philippines (Huk Rebellion) <sup>a</sup>	1946-1954	Philippine Islands vs. Hukbalahap
Madagascar <sup>b</sup>	1947-1948	France vs. Mouvement Democratique de la Renovation Malagache (MDRM)
Malayan Emergency <sup>a</sup>	1948-1960	Britain vs. Malayan Communist Party and Malayan Races Liberation Army (MRLA)
Kenya Emergency <sup>b</sup>	1952-1960	Britain vs. Mau Mau
Oman <sup>b</sup>	1955-1959	Jebel Akhdar and Britain vs. Talib
Cameroon <sup>b</sup>	1955-1962	French Cameroon vs. Union des Populations du Cameroon (UPC)
Venezuela <sup>a</sup>	1961-1969	Venezuela vs. Armed Forces of National Liberation (FALN) and Cuba-assisted guerillas
Dhofar <sup>b</sup>	1962-1976	Oman and Britain vs. Dhofar Liberation Front (DLF)
Bolivia <sup>a</sup>	1966-1968	Bolivia vs. Ché Guevara
Salvadoran Civil War <sup>a</sup>	1979-1991	U.S.A. and Government of El Salvador (GoES) vs. Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN)

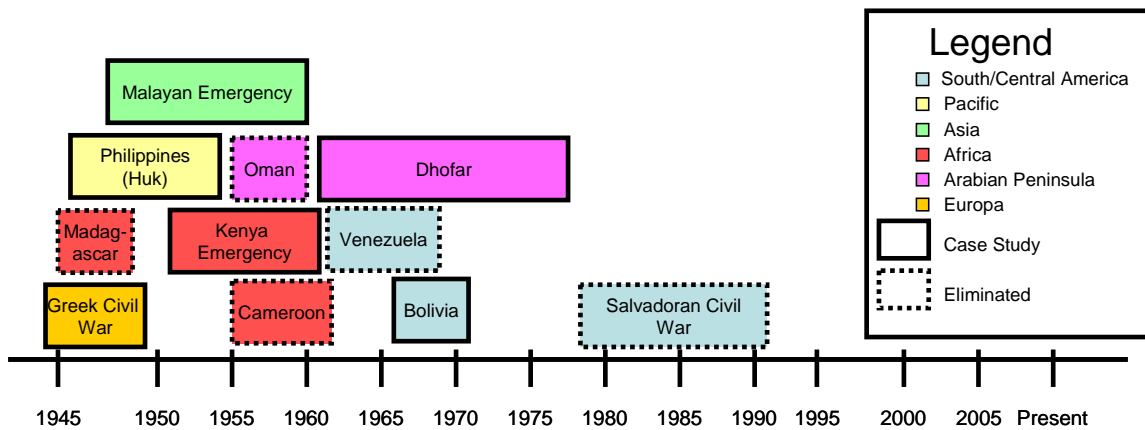
a – communist, b – nationalistic, autonomy, or independence from colonial rule

### **Figure 1. Failed Insurgencies**

The eleven failed insurgencies ranged in duration from 1 to 14 years with an average duration of 7 years. They can also be sub-divided into two types of insurgency: communist or one based on nationalism, autonomy, or independence from colonial rule.

<sup>11</sup> Condit et. al., *A Counterinsurgency Bibliography*, 10.

Six of these failed insurgencies were identified as communist in nature and five were identified as insurgencies based on nationalism, autonomy, or independence from colonial rule. The location of these eleven failed insurgencies can be sub-divided into six geographic locations: South or Central America (3); Pacific (1); Asia (1); Africa (3); Arabian Peninsula (2); and Europe (1). Figure 2 – “Failed Insurgencies Timeline” illustrates the duration and broad global spectrum of these eleven failed insurgencies.



**Figure 2. Failed Insurgencies Timeline**

Of the eleven failed insurgencies identified in Figure 2 – “Failed Insurgencies Timeline,” six failed insurgencies have been selected for this thesis: Greek Civil War, Philippines (Huk), Malayan Emergency, Kenya Emergency, Dhofar, and Bolivia. These six failed insurgencies cover a broad global spectrum and duration. Each of these six insurgencies has its own characteristics and lessons, and a thorough examination of all of them can help counterinsurgent forces plan for future operations.

The insurgencies in Madagascar, Cameroon, and Venezuela were eliminated largely due to the lack of primary sources. Available sources on these insurgencies have generally not been translated, and those records available in English were determined to contain bias that could not be adequately reduced by using numerous primary sources. It was also deemed necessary to eliminate the Oman and the Salvadoran insurgencies from

this list due to available research time for this thesis. The elimination of these five insurgencies does not impact the desired duration and broad global spectrum of this thesis.

Now that six post-World War II failed insurgencies have been identified the next steps are to define insurgency and establish the prerequisites for a successful insurgency. Insurgency is defined and differing insurgency models (military-focused, protracted popular war, urban, conspiratorial, identity-focused, composite and coalition) are examined in Chapter II. In order to identify common characteristics that can be exploited, the prerequisites, which are the necessary and sufficient conditions of successful insurgencies, must be identified. Six prerequisites required for a successful insurgency are identified in Chapter III. These prerequisites are (1) a cause to fight for, (2) local populace support, (3) a weakness in authority, (4) geographic conditions, (5) external support, and (6) information advantage. A Likert scale with possible responses of significant advantage, limited advantage, limited disadvantage, and significant disadvantage was used to distinguish between characteristics of each failed insurgency and facilitate identification of trends.

This study's analysis includes a summary of each selected failed insurgency's background, insurgent strategy, and counterinsurgent strategy. Each failed insurgency was then analyzed in relationship to the six prerequisites for a successful insurgency utilizing a Likert scale. The initial and final stage of each insurgency was compared. The resulting information was then compiled in the "Blank Failed Insurgency Comparison Chart" shown in Figure 3.

Prerequisites for a successful insurgency	Greek Civil War	Philippines (Huk)	Malaya Emergency	Kenya Emergency	Dhofar Rebellion	Bolivia
A Cause to Fight For	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Local Populace Support	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Weakness in the Authority	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Geographic Conditions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
External Support	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Information Advantage	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Legend**

- Significant Advantage
- ◐ Limited Advantage
- ◑ Limited Disadvantage
- Significant Disadvantage

**Figure 3. Blank Failed Insurgency Comparison Chart**

An explanation of the estimative language of the Likert scale used in this thesis is required. The possible responses used in the Likert scale pertaining to the degree of advantage or disadvantage that an insurgency may have reference the counterinsurgent forces is intended to reflect a degree of comparison. Assigning a precise numerical rating to these judgments would require a more rigorous methodology than is required for this thesis. The neutral measurement was removed from this Likert scale because the status of neutrality of these prerequisites would in all likelihood be fleeting at best. The insurgency or the authority will always have an advantage or disadvantage at any given moment in time. This methodology enabled the identification of meaningful trends that were then studied in order to build a theory for exploiting weaknesses in modern insurgencies with the goal of facilitating failure in future insurgencies.

#### **E. ORGANIZATION OF THESIS**

The first chapter identifies the purpose of this thesis, the relevancy of studying insurgencies, and describes the methodology for selecting the failed insurgencies and the framework for comparison. The second chapter defines insurgency and counterinsurgency. Six insurgent approaches (military-focused, protracted popular war,

urban, conspiratorial, identity-focused, and composite and coalition) are described. The third chapter identifies and defines the six prerequisites (a cause to fight for, local populace support, a weakness in authority, geographic conditions, external support, and information advantage) that are necessary for an insurgency to succeed. The fourth chapter is the examination of six selected case studies of post-World War II failed insurgencies: the Greek Civil War (1946-1949), the Philippines – Huk Rebellion (1946-1954), the Malayan Emergency (1948-1960), Kenya Emergency (1952-1960), Dhofar (1962-1976), and Bolivia (1966-1968). The fifth chapter is an analysis of the findings in the fourth chapter. Each prerequisite for a successful insurgency is discussed with a focus on identifying trends that could identify vulnerabilities for exploitation in future insurgencies. The sixth chapter is the conclusion and a discussion on the implications of the findings in the fifth chapter on future counterinsurgency operations. Appendix A is a list of the seventy-two post-World War II insurgencies. Appendix B is an extended bibliography. Appendix C is a list of abbreviations used in this thesis.

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## **II. INSURGENCY AND COUNTERINSURGENCY**

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

The complex subsets of warfare, insurgency and counterinsurgency, will be examined in this chapter. Though the terms insurgency and counterinsurgency do not easily lend themselves to precise definition, each exhibit common characteristics. Insurgency and counterinsurgency are distinctly different types of operations.<sup>12</sup> Unless the concepts of insurgency and counterinsurgency are clearly defined and understood, productive discussion and comparative analysis of the selected six failed insurgencies becomes difficult, if not impossible.

### **B. INSURGENCY**

The tactics that characterize an insurgency have existed as long as warfare itself. The official U.S. Department of Defense and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) definition of insurgency is "An organized movement aimed at the overthrow of a constituted government through use of subversion and armed conflict."<sup>13</sup> The recently released U. S. Department of the Army, *Field Manual 3-24, Counterinsurgency* expands on this definition by stating that "an insurgency is an organized, protracted politico-military struggle designed to weaken the control and legitimacy of an established government, occupying power, or other political authority while increasing insurgent control...Insurgents use all available tools—political (including diplomatic), informational (including appeals to religious, ethnic, or ideological beliefs), military, and economic—to overthrow the existing authority."<sup>14</sup>

Throughout history insurgencies have taken numerous forms. *Field Manual 3-24* emphasizes the fact that insurgencies throughout history have utilized differing approaches and proven quite adaptive; therefore, counterinsurgency planners cannot focus their strategy on countering just one insurgent approach. Insurgencies can range

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<sup>12</sup> U. S. Depart. of the Army, *FM 3-24, Counterinsurgency*, 1-1.

<sup>13</sup> U. S. Department of Defense, *Joint Publication 1-02 Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, (Washington D. C.: Government Printing Office, 12 April 2001 [as Amended Through 9 November 2006]), 267.

<sup>14</sup> U. S. Depart. of the Army, *FM 3-24, Counterinsurgency*, 1-1.



from terrorist and guerrilla tactics to conventional military action. Insurgencies are usually comprised of irregular military forces. Though each insurgency is unique, there are similarities amongst them. For example, all insurgencies seek political change, and the use of military force is subordinate to political objectives. Even religiously fueled insurgencies seek political change, but unlike other insurgencies this political change is not an end. Political change in the case of religiously fueled insurgencies is a means of acquiring the goals of the insurgency. Understanding that insurgencies are adaptive and affected by their surrounding external stimuli, counterinsurgent planners must comprehend that insurgencies cannot be defeated by a fixed approach.<sup>15</sup>

In order to defeat an insurgency, counterinsurgent leaders must determine the most likely approaches that an insurgency is utilizing to advance its cause. Comparative analysis of the selected six post-World War II failed insurgencies is facilitated by using the following six insurgent approaches.<sup>16</sup>

- Military-focused (Ché)
- Protracted popular war (Mao)
- Urban (Marighella)
- Conspiratorial (Lenin)
- Identity-focused
- Composite and coalition.

### **1. Military-focused Insurgency Approach**

According to *Field Manual 3-24*, insurgencies that utilize a military-focused approach endeavor to generate a revolution or to overthrow the authority using military force. Military-focused insurgencies are usually characterized by the fact that they have little or no political structure; control is not spread through political subversion, but

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<sup>15</sup> U. S. Depart. of the Army, *FM 3-24, Counterinsurgency*, 1-3, 1-5.

<sup>16</sup> These approaches were developed primarily from two sources: (1) Insurgent approaches listed in the U. S. Depart. of the Army, *FM 3-24, Counterinsurgency*, 1-5 to 1-8; and (2) notes from Dr. Gordon McCormick's Guerilla Warfare Seminar SO3802, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, CA, September 5, 2006.

through the movement of military forces.<sup>17</sup> Ernesto “Ché” Guevara’s *foco* approach is an example of a military-focused approach. In the *foco* approach the “guerrilla band is an armed nucleus, the fighting vanguard of the people.”<sup>18</sup> This fighting vanguard, consisting of small and mobile paramilitary groups operating in a rural environment, theoretically would enable the insurgency to turn latent populace dissatisfaction into a revolution.

## **2. Protracted Popular War Insurgency Approach**

Conflicts of protracted duration favor the insurgents, and the protracted popular war approach is arguably one of the best approaches to insurgency. *Field Manual 3-24* posits that this approach is complex and therefore few modern insurgencies have fully utilized this approach. It is important to understand, since most modern insurgencies utilize portions of this approach.<sup>19</sup>

Mao Tse-Tung, one of the most influential theorists of insurgency in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, recognized that the Marxist-Leninist model of urban revolution, a conspiratorial insurgency approach, was inappropriate for the overwhelmingly rural populace of China. Fighting under these conditions Mao developed a model of insurgency that can best be described as a protracted popular war that occurs in three phases: strategic defense, strategic stalemate, and strategic offensive. As the war progresses, the insurgency gradually develops into conventional forces that will operate in conjunction with regular conventional army units. This approach also emphasizes the necessity of the insurgency having a clearly defined political goal and a political organization within the insurgent force structure. If insurgent leaders believe that the war is purely a military matter, Mao Tse-Tung argues that this loss of understanding of the political nature of insurgencies “will cause the people to lose confidence and will result in defeat.”<sup>20</sup>

The historian Edgar O’Ballance has written that “The completeness and immensity of the victories of the Red Army of China – when belatedly they were fully

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<sup>17</sup> U. S. Depart. of the Army, *FM 3-24, Counterinsurgency*, 1-5.

<sup>18</sup> Ernesto Guevara, *Guerrilla Warfare* (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), 10.

<sup>19</sup> U. S. Depart. of the Army, *FM 3-24, Counterinsurgency*, 1-6.

<sup>20</sup> Mao Tse-Tung, *On Guerilla Warfare*, trans. Samuel B. Griffith II (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 43.

comprehended – caused a depression to settle on Western Statesmen, generals, and military theorists, as conventional warfare seemed impotent against it.”<sup>21</sup> Encouraged by Mao’s success many insurgent leaders sought to replicate Mao’s model of insurgency, protracted popular war. What most of these insurgent leaders failed to understand was that the success of Mao’s protracted popular war approach was primarily due to the unique conditions of China in the 1920s and 1930s. Unable to replicate these conditions when faced with failure in their own countries, insurgent leaders usually opted to modify their approach.

### **3. Urban-focused Insurgency Approach**

Insurgent organizations using the urban-focused approach operate in an urban environment using terrorist tactics to: sow disorder, incite sectarian violence, weaken the authority, intimidate the populace, kill authority and opposition leaders, fix and intimidate security forces, limit their ability to respond, and create an environment of increased government oppression. This approach requires little to no popular support.<sup>22</sup>

The approach advocated by Carlos Marighella in his book, *Minimanual of the Urban Guerrilla*, is a good example of how the urban approach could be applied. Born in 1911 Carlos Marighella, the son of Italian immigrants, was a Brazilian guerrilla revolutionary and Marxist writer. Before becoming a guerilla revolutionary, Marighella worked as a Brazilian legislator and as a leader of the nationalist Communist party. In February 1968 he founded the *Alianca Libertadora Nacional* (ALN). The name of this organization was borrowed from a banned and short-lived 1930’s revolutionary organization. After Marighella was killed in 1969, the ALN was then completely destroyed by Brazilian security forces within a year. Marighella published two books, *Minimanual of the Urban Guerrilla* and *For the Liberation of Brazil*. *The Minimanual of the Urban Guerrilla* was a simple guidebook on how to disrupt and overthrow the authority with an aim to revolution. Many argue that the theories laid out in Marighella’s books have greatly influenced modern ideological terrorism.

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<sup>21</sup> Edgar O’Ballance. *The Greek Civil War 1944-49* (London: Frederick A. Praeger Publishers, 1966), 19.

<sup>22</sup> U. S. Depart. of the Army, *FM 3-24, Counterinsurgency*, 1-6.

#### **4. Conspiratorial Insurgency Approach**

According to *Field Manual 3-24*, insurgencies that utilize a conspiratorial approach initially involve only a few leaders and a militant cadre. This approach requires the development of a small vanguard force that organizes and leads the revolution. This small force then either exploits existing revolutionary conditions or seizes control of critical government structures. This approach was used by Lenin during the Bolshevik Revolution. The insurgents must remain shrouded in secrecy until the conditions are established such that an authority can be overthrown quickly.<sup>23</sup>

#### **5. Identity-focused Insurgency Approach**

An identity-focused insurgency approach is described in *Field Manual 3-24* as mobilizing support for the insurgency “based on the common identity of religious affiliation, clan, tribe, or ethnic group.”<sup>24</sup> This approach has become a common characteristic of most modern insurgencies. Though not always the primary approach used by an insurgency, it can be combined with the Ché, Mao, Marighella, or Lenin models of insurgency.

A common characteristic of insurgent organizations utilizing the identity-focused approach is the lack of a dual military/political hierarchy. In most cases whole communities will join the insurgency, and utilize their existing social/military hierarchy. In an effort to gain strength, insurgent leaders will often attempt to mobilize the leadership of other clans and tribes.<sup>25</sup>

#### **6. Composite and Coalition Insurgency Approach**

Modern insurgencies have evolved in sophistication to the point where they often adapt by utilizing different insurgency approaches at varying times. Reacting to external stimuli, modern insurgencies will seek to utilize the most appropriate tactics that enable the insurgent leaders to take advantage of current conditions. As they do this they will often apply a composite approach. Additionally, competing insurgent forces may form loose coalitions when it serves their interests. This may lead to the confusing situation of insurgent forces fighting as a loose coalition against counterinsurgent forces, while

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<sup>23</sup> U. S. Depart. of the Army, *FM 3-24, Counterinsurgency*, 1-5.

<sup>24</sup> U. S. Depart. of the Army, *FM 3-24, Counterinsurgency*, 1-8.

<sup>25</sup> U. S. Depart. of the Army, *FM 3-24, Counterinsurgency*, 1-8.

simultaneously fighting amongst themselves. In today's battlefield, counterinsurgent forces may be faced with several competing insurgent movements within their area of operations. This complicated reality has made planning and executing successful counterinsurgency operations even more difficult.<sup>26</sup>

### **C. COUNTERINSURGENCY**

The official U.S. Department of Defense definition of counterinsurgency is "those military, paramilitary, political, economic, psychological, and civic actions taken by a government to defeat an insurgency."<sup>27</sup> According to *Field Manual 3-24*, counterinsurgent forces must utilize all available instruments of national power in order to sustain an existing or emerging legitimate authority. This requirement is why counterinsurgency is the graduate level of war.<sup>28</sup>

Counterinsurgency expert John A. Nagl identified the two different counterinsurgency approaches that armies have turned to throughout history: annihilation and turning the loyalty of the populace. Nagl rightly points out that an annihilation approach is not feasible in liberal democracies. Furthermore the record of success for counterinsurgencies utilizing an annihilation approach is dismal. This approach generally leads to military dominated campaigns that miss both the critical political and populace aspects of counterinsurgency operations.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> U. S. Depart. of the Army, *FM 3-24, Counterinsurgency*, 1-8.

<sup>27</sup> U. S. Department of Defense, *Joint Publication 1-02 Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, 128.

<sup>28</sup> U. S. Depart. of the Army, *FM 3-24, Counterinsurgency*, 1-1.

<sup>29</sup> John A. Nagl, *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife: Counterinsurgency Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2005), 26-27.

### **III. PREREQUISITES OF SUCCESSFUL INSURGENCIES**

#### **A. INTRODUCTION**

It is not yet clear what conditions are necessary and sufficient for the initiation of an insurgency. However, it is possible to delineate prerequisites that are necessary for an insurgency to succeed. It is not clear, however, that the presence of these prerequisites by themselves will be sufficient for an insurgency to succeed.

What are the primary prerequisites for a successful insurgency? A list of prerequisites required for a successful insurgency can be established using past historical studies of insurgencies. In this case, two seminal counterinsurgency works, by the authors Colonel David Galula and Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Julian Paget were utilized to develop a list of prerequisites for a successful insurgency.

#### **B. DAVID GALULA PREREQUISITES FOR A SUCCESSFUL INSURGENCY**

United States military officers have recently rediscovered Colonel David Galula's book, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice*, now considered an essential text on insurgency and counterinsurgency. Colonel Galula was born in Tunisia in 1919 and spent most of his boyhood in Casablanca, Morocco. In 1938 he chose a career in the French Army. Galula graduated in 1940 from the French Military Academy at Saint-Cyr, then served in the European theater during World War II and saw action in North Africa, Italy, Germany, and France. From 1945 to 1948 he was assigned to China where he studied Mao Tse-tung's guerrilla campaign and was taken captive by the communists. Galula then spent eighteen months (1949-1950) in Greece as a United Nations Military Observer where he witnessed the end of the Greek Civil War. From 1951 to 1955 he served in Hong Kong as a military attaché. Finally he fought in the Algerian War from 1956 to 1958.<sup>30</sup> In 1956 Colonel Galula was given command of a company responsible for the district of Kabylie, east of Algiers. Though he took command of this company at the height of the Algerian Rebellion, Colonel Galula succeeded in clearing the area of insurgents and returning it to governmental control during his command. From 1958 to

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<sup>30</sup> David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice*, 4th ed. (London: Praeger, 1968), v.

1962 Colonel Galula worked at general military headquarters in Paris. During this time he focused on various aspects of unconventional warfare, especially issues related to the war in Algeria.<sup>31</sup> In 1962 he joined the Center for International Affairs, Harvard University. In 1964 Colonel Galula published *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice*. He died in 1967.

Colonel Galula's credibility as an expert on insurgency and counterinsurgency is enhanced by the fact that he was a practitioner and not a pure academic. As an author he demonstrated a keen understanding that insurgency and counterinsurgency were clearly different types of war. The military analyst Bernard Fall in his book, *Street Without Joy*, stated that Colonel Galula's book was "the 'how-to' book in the field—and the best of them all"<sup>32</sup>

In *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* Galula describes four primary prerequisites for a successful insurgency.<sup>33</sup>

- A cause to fight for.
- Weakness of the counterinsurgent – A police and administrative weakness in the counterinsurgent force.
- Geographic Conditions – A not too hostile geographic environment.
- Outside Support – In the middle and later stages of an insurgency.

### **C. JULIAN PAGET PREREQUISITES FOR A SUCCESSFUL INSURGENCY**

Sir Julian Paget, 4<sup>th</sup> Baronet, served from 1940 to 1968 in the British army as an officer in the Coldstream Guards Regiment. In 1965 Paget served in a staff position responsible for the planning of both civilian and military resources required to defeat the insurgency in his area of operations in Aden. While serving in this position Paget realized that though the problems he faced were complex and multifaceted they were for the most part not new. Lacking formal training in counterinsurgency Paget devoted his free time to

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<sup>31</sup> Stephen T. Hosmer and Sibylle O. Crane (eds), *Counterinsurgency: A Symposium, April 16-20, 1962* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2006), xix-xx.

<sup>32</sup> Bernard B. Fall, *Street Without Joy*, 4th ed. Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: The Stackpole Company, 1967, 400.

<sup>33</sup> Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare*, 42.

researching past insurgencies in the hope of finding answers for the current problems facing him on a daily basis in Aden. In 1967 Paget's research notes were to form the basis for his book, *Counter-insurgency Operations: Techniques of Guerilla Warfare*.<sup>34</sup>

In *Counter-insurgency Operations: Techniques of Guerilla Warfare* Paget describes five primary prerequisites for a successful insurgency.<sup>35</sup>

- A cause to fight for.
- Support from the local populace.
- Bases from which to operate.
- Mobility – freedom of movement.
- Supplies

#### **D. PREREQUISITES FOR A SUCCESSFUL INSURGENCY IN CONTEXT OF THE MODERN WORLD**

Unlike conventional warfare, combating an insurgency requires new approaches to the development of both political and military strategies. Military scholar Max G. Manwaring best captures this challenge in his statement, “The requirement to look for political, psychological, economic, and moral centers of gravity – and operationalize them – may challenge some long held beliefs.”<sup>36</sup> Galula and Paget's lists of primary prerequisites for a successful insurgency were combined and account for the first five prerequisites listed below. But upon further examination this list of prerequisites is determined to be incomplete for combating post-World War II insurgencies; therefore, the last prerequisite, information advantage, has been added to form a new list of six prerequisites for a successful insurgency.

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<sup>34</sup> Julian Paget, *Counter-Insurgency Campaigning* (London: Faber and Faber, 1967), 11.

<sup>35</sup> Paget, *Counter-Insurgency Campaigning*, 23.

<sup>36</sup> Max G. Manwaring, “Toward an Understanding of Insurgency Wars: The New Paradigm,” in *Uncomfortable Wars: Toward a New Paradigm of Low Intensity Conflict* (Oxford: Westview Press, 1991), 19.



- A cause to fight for.
- Local populace support.
- Weakness in the authority.
- Geographic conditions.
- External support.
- Information advantage.

### **1. A Cause to Fight For**

Counterinsurgency expert Sir Frank Kitson observed in his seminal work on low intensity operations that “insurgents start with nothing but a cause and grow to strength, while the counter-insurgents start with everything but a cause and gradually decline in strength to the point of weakness.”<sup>37</sup> According to Galula, at the outset of an insurgency the importance of a cause is an absolute essential, but this importance progressively decreases as the insurgency acquires strength.<sup>38</sup>

Successful insurgencies will exploit an existing issue to create a cause that appeals to the populace. Galula argues that this cause must be able to inspire, mobilize, and bring closer together the local populace and insurgents. This cause must also be lasting, if not for the duration of the insurgency, at least until the insurgent movement is well established.<sup>39</sup> Paget adds that the insurgent’s morale and determination to fight are, to a large extent, dependent on having a worthwhile cause to fight for.<sup>40</sup>

Galula believes that the vulnerability of a country to insurgency can be determined by the depth and the acuity of its existing problems. These problems may be political (related to domestic or internal situations), social, economic, racial, religious, or

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<sup>37</sup> Frank Kitson, *Low Intensity Operations: Subversion, Insurgency, Peacekeeping* (London: Faber and Faber, 1971), 29.

<sup>38</sup> Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare*, 25.

<sup>39</sup> Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare*, 21.

<sup>40</sup> Paget, *Counter-Insurgency Campaigning*, 23.

cultural. Ironically, an artificial problem will even work as long as it is accepted as fact by the populace.<sup>41</sup> Paget observed that the cause must be convincing to the populace as well as to the insurgents.<sup>42</sup> Galula argues that it is not necessary for the issue upon which a cause is based to be acute. If an underlying issue is utilized, then the first task of insurgent leaders is to raise the political consciousness of the populace. Insurgents may utilize terrorism as an efficient and quick method for doing so.<sup>43</sup> Political scientist Stephen Metz points out in his study for the U.S. Army Strategic Studies Institute, *Counterinsurgency: Strategy and the Phoenix of American Capability*, that virtually all of the successful insurgencies during the Cold War era followed some variant of a “people’s war” with one of the defining characteristics being the insurgent’s primacy of political organization over military operations.<sup>44</sup> This demonstrates that the insurgents understand the importance of raising the political consciousness of the masses and properly grooming a worthwhile cause that is convincing to the populace as well as to the insurgents. Both Galula and Paget have also argued that a cause is critical to an insurgency accomplishing the second prerequisite of gaining the support of the local populace.

## **2. Local Populace Support**

A primary characteristic of an insurgency is the fight to control the populace.<sup>45</sup> Since insurgents make up a small percentage of the populace and lack material capacity, technology, and firepower, they can not hope to initially successfully confront counterinsurgent forces in conventional warfare. They have sought new ground to offset the counterinsurgent force’s strengths. In 1968, Galula observed that this new ground was the populace.<sup>46</sup> Success of both counterinsurgent and insurgent forces depends on their ability to influence the populace in ways beneficial to their causes. The most important

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<sup>41</sup> Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare*, 21-22.

<sup>42</sup> Paget, *Counter-Insurgency Campaigning*, 23.

<sup>43</sup> Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare*, 23.

<sup>44</sup> Steven Metz, *Counterinsurgency: Strategy and the Phoenix of American Capability* (U.S. Army War College Strategic Studies Institute: Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, February 28, 1995), 4.

<sup>45</sup> Two of Paget’s prerequisites for a successful insurgency, mobility and supplies, are incorporated into this prerequisite.

<sup>46</sup> Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare*, 7.

continuing goal of an insurgency according to counterinsurgency expert T. E. Lawrence “is to win over the civil population—whether by kindness or terrorism, by rosy promises of pie in the sky or by burning down dwellings.”<sup>47</sup>

At the beginning of hostilities, the populace typically is divided into three distinct groups: a small body of people already willing to support the guerrilla, a large neutral group, and a small segment that is actively hostile to the insurgents. It is the task of the guerrilla leader to identify the small group already friendly to his cause and to use it to control the majority and neutralize the hostile minority.<sup>48</sup> Success of both counterinsurgent and insurgent forces depends on their ability to influence the populace to do what is beneficial to them.

In conventional war the primary objective is to close with and destroy the enemy’s military and then occupy his territory. In contrast the insurgent’s primary objective is to control the populace. Insurgent organizations understand that they are dependent on the local populace for information, supplies, recruits, sanctuary, and freedom of movement. The support of the populace can range from active participation to passive support. When individuals within the populace simply do not do anything to deter the insurgency, they are passively supporting the insurgency through their inaction and lack of support for the government. This passive support is the minimum support that an insurgency requires from the local populace. In order to be successful, an insurgency must set the conditions such that the local populace will not betray them. The insurgents must separate the local populace from the counterinsurgent forces. An insurgency must identify and cultivate the constituency that it desires to influence. Counterinsurgency expert T. E. Lawrence contended that successful rebellions can be made by 2% of the populace actively serving in a striking force, and the remaining 98% is passively sympathetic.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> U.S. Naval Institute, Annapolis, *Studies in Guerilla Warfare* (Menasha, Wisconsin: George Banta Co., 1963), 15.

<sup>48</sup> Hosmer and Crane, *A Symposium*, April 16-20, 9.

<sup>49</sup> T.E. Lawrence, “Science of Guerilla Warfare,” vol.10, *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 14 ed., 1929, in *Conflict After the Cold War: Arguments on Causes of War and Peace*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. New York: Pearson Education, Inc., 2005, 456.

The key to local populace support is the net effects of the acts that the insurgency commits. People generally react to incentives and disincentives. They will compare the net effect of positive and negative insurgency incentives versus the net effect of positive and negative government incentives. This can be simply expressed in equation form as:

$$EB_I - EC_I \geq \text{ or } \leq EB_G - EC_G$$

whereas,

E is expectation

C<sub>I</sub> is the cost to the populace for supporting the insurgency

C<sub>G</sub> is the cost to the populace for supporting the government

B<sub>I</sub> is the benefit to the populace for supporting the insurgency

B<sub>G</sub> is the benefit to the populace for supporting the government

**Figure 4. Populace Support Equation**

(Source: Dr. Gordon McCormick, Guerilla Warfare Seminar SO3802, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, CA August 22, 2006)

Local populace support for an insurgency derives from the fact that the expected net insurgent incentives are greater than the expected net government incentives. There are primarily two ways that an insurgency can gain the required support of the local populace. The first way is that is that the insurgency controls the populace. The second way is that support for an insurgency may result not because the insurgency controls the populace but because of governmental mistreatment. Therefore, the ability of an insurgency to gain the required local populace support is not only based on the insurgency choices, but also on the choices that the government makes.

If the government and counterinsurgent forces are unable to control the environment then the insurgents' incentives are more credible. Counterinsurgent forces must understand that critical intelligence about the insurgency will not be found in satellite imagery, unmanned aerial vehicle live feeds, or computer databases, "but in people -- little people, insignificant people, but people without whose support the

combatant in the "little war" is bound to be defeated."<sup>50</sup> Paget acknowledged the importance of the populace when he stated in his book, *Counter-Insurgency Campaigning*, that if the people defy the insurgents and co-operate with the government and counterinsurgent forces, as in the later phases of the Malayan and Kenya Emergencies, the insurgency cannot long survive.<sup>51</sup> Successful insurgencies understand that they must first control the local populace and then win their support.

### **3. Weakness in the Authority**

Is the authority unable to prevent insurgent operations? In FM 3-24 the authority is defined as "an established government or an interim governing body"<sup>52</sup> that scholars Nathan Leites and Charles Wolf, Jr. describe as having "a legal and legitimized right and capacity to command."<sup>53</sup> Galula argues that even if insurgent leaders are able to identify and develop viable causes upon which to base their insurgency, they cannot successfully begin operations without some sort of protection.<sup>54</sup> The question for insurgent leaders is then how to acquire the required protection to begin operations.

Successful insurgencies diminish security within the country by infiltrating the authority. If an insurgency is able to prevent the authority from providing security for the populace, the populace will act as the insurgents wish. A government that is unable to provide adequate security for the local populace cannot expect their support, while a government that does so can expect their support. In the initial phase of an insurgency, insurgent leaders will strive to conceal their true intentions. If insurgents are successful at concealing, then the authority will be at a great disadvantage. During a symposium with both insurgent and counterinsurgent practitioners it was the consensus that "The counterinsurgent suffers a serious disadvantage vis-à-vis the insurgent if the latter is allowed to develop unnoticed and unchecked."<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> U.S. Naval Institute, *Studies in Guerilla Warfare*, Introduction.

<sup>51</sup> Paget, *Counter-Insurgency Campaigning*, 24.

<sup>52</sup> U. S. Depart. of the Army, *FM 3-24, Counterinsurgency*, 1-1.

<sup>53</sup> Nathan Leites and Charles Wolf, Jr., *Rebellion and Authority: An Analytic Essay on Insurgent Conflicts, R-462-ARPA* (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 1970), 4.

<sup>54</sup> Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare*, 26.

<sup>55</sup> Hosmer and Crane, *A Symposium, April 16-20*, 2.

Galula wrote that the counterinsurgent leaders' resoluteness and knowledge of counterinsurgency warfare are major factors in determining the weakness in the authority. The resoluteness of counterinsurgent leaders is a major factor because insurgents usually begin with a dynamic cause and the authority's reaction against a developing insurgency is typically slow. But, Galula argues that being resolute is not enough to guarantee counterinsurgent leaders victory; they must also understand how to fight an insurgency.<sup>56</sup>

#### **4. Geographic Conditions**

The role of geography in insurgency is critical to success.<sup>57</sup> Galula argues that with an insurgency's initial weakness, if it does not gain an advantage due to the geographic conditions, the insurgency may very well be condemned to failure before it even starts. International borders, size, configuration, and terrain are all geographic factors that effect insurgencies.<sup>58</sup>

International borders may be a strategic weakness or strength for an insurgency. International borders are a strategic strength for an insurgency if the countries bordering the counterinsurgent country support the insurgency through sanctuary and freedom of movement. International borders are a strategic weakness for an insurgency if the bordering countries do not support them and the insurgency may be greatly weakened due to isolation.

Galula observes that size can affect the ability of the authority to govern effectively. The greater the size of a country, the more difficult it is for an authority to control it.<sup>59</sup> The more difficult it is for an authority to control a country, the greater the likelihood that an insurgency will be able to establish sanctuaries from which to operate.

Configuration of a country can affect the success of an insurgency. Galula argues that a country that is easy for the authority to compartmentalize will hinder the

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<sup>56</sup> Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare*, 26-27.

<sup>57</sup> Two of Paget's prerequisites for a successful insurgency, mobility and bases, fall into this category.

<sup>58</sup> Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare*, 35-38.

<sup>59</sup> Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare*, 35-36.

insurgent,<sup>60</sup> while a country that is not easy for the authority to compartmentalize will enable the insurgent's mobility and ability to establish bases.

Terrain is also a factor that affects an insurgency. Successful insurgencies must adapt their operations to fit the terrain. Rural insurgencies will operate and communicate quite differently than urban insurgencies. Paget noted that generally the survival of the insurgents is considered more important than the retention of terrain.<sup>61</sup> Successful insurgencies establish numerous well dispersed bases that, when discovered by the authority, the insurgents will make no attempt to defend. Paget argues that insurgents will seldom attempt to retain terrain, because to do so places the initiative in the hands of the counterinsurgent forces, and also deprives the insurgents of their greatest advantage, mobility.<sup>62</sup>

## **5. External Support**

External support can take the form of moral, political, technical, financial, or military support.<sup>63</sup>

- Moral support can take the form of propaganda.
- Political support can take the form of diplomatic pressure in the international arena.
- Technical support can take the form of advisors.
- Financial support can be overt or covert in nature.
- Military support can range from direct intervention to providing sanctuary for the insurgency's training bases.

No external support is required during the initial stage of an insurgency, though it obviously facilitates operations and the growth of the insurgency when available. External support is critical during the middle and later stages of an insurgency. External

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<sup>60</sup> Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare*, 36.

<sup>61</sup> Paget, *Counter-Insurgency Campaigning*, 25.

<sup>62</sup> Paget, *Counter-Insurgency Campaigning*, 25-26.

<sup>63</sup> Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare*, 39. Two of Paget's prerequisites for a successful insurgency, bases and supplies, fall into this category.

military support cannot initially be absorbed in significant amounts by an insurgency. As an insurgency reaches the level of development where it passes from insurgent operations to more conventional forms of operations, the requirement for support and supplies will become greater. If the insurgent is unable to capture the required supplies from counterinsurgent forces then external support is required. Failure to acquire the necessary supplies or external support will hinder the development of an insurgent organization.<sup>64</sup>

## **6. Information Advantage**

According to the new U.S. army counterinsurgency manual, the information environment is a critical dimension that insurgents attempt to shape to their advantage.<sup>65</sup> Guerrilla warfare scholar, Gordon McCormick, argues that at the beginning of an insurgency, the insurgency has an information advantage and a force disadvantage, while the authority has an information disadvantage and a force advantage. If it does not begin with an information advantage then it is not an insurgency. Insurgencies seek to maintain the information advantage over time as they improve their force disadvantage. On the other hand, the authority seeks to maintain the force advantage over time as they work to neutralize the insurgency's information advantage.<sup>66</sup>

Information is more than traditional intelligence. It encompasses both the information and cognitive domains of the battlespace. If the authority and counterinsurgent forces do not understand the information environment, they will be unable to efficiently develop gathered intelligence. The information environment includes cultural awareness, an in-depth understanding of informal communications channels such as rumor and word-of-mouth, identification of formal and informal leaders, surveillance or sensors, covert and overt surveys of the battlespace which is the populace, as well as intelligence. It more importantly includes the battle for the minds of the populace, which is the cognitive domain. The support of the populace is required for the insurgency to maintain an information advantage. At a symposium of counterinsurgent and insurgent experts it was argued that in order for the insurgent to survive, he must have better

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<sup>64</sup> Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare*, 39-42.

<sup>65</sup> U. S. Depart. of the Army, *FM 3-24, Counterinsurgency*, 1-3.

<sup>66</sup> Dr. Gordon McCormick, Guerilla Warfare Seminar SO3802, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, CA, August 22, 2006



intelligence than the authority – an advantage that he can achieve only if he has sufficient support of the populace.<sup>67</sup>

An information advantage allows insurgent leaders to have and maintain the initiative. The greater their information advantage the greater their initiative capabilities. The insurgent Carlos Marighella argued that an insurgent's information service must be better than the authority's, because without initiative there is no insurgency.<sup>68</sup>

Counterinsurgency expert T. E. Lawrence wrote in 1920 that “the printing press is the greatest weapon in the armory of the modern commander.”<sup>69</sup> Galula wrote that in the post-World War II era “propaganda is the chief instrument of moral support, used to sway public opinion when it is adverse, or to reinforce existing public sympathy.”<sup>70</sup> The military history scholar, Ian Beckett, argues that “Contributing to the globalization of insurgency after 1945 was the development of mass communications and the ability of the insurgent to use the media in ways undreamed of by Mao, especially in urban areas.”<sup>71</sup> The ability of insurgencies to gain an information advantage through propaganda has been greatly enhanced by technological advances. *Field Manual 3-24* points out that

Insurgents have an additional advantage in shaping the information environment. Counterinsurgents seeking to preserve legitimacy must stick to the truth and make sure that words are backed up by deeds; insurgents, on the other hand, can make exorbitant promises and point out government shortcomings, many caused or aggravated by the insurgency. Ironically, as insurgents achieve more success and begin to control larger portions of the populace, many of these asymmetries diminish. That may produce new vulnerabilities that adaptive counterinsurgents can exploit.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Hosmer and Crane, *A Symposium*, April 16-20, 9.

<sup>68</sup> Carlos Marighella, *Mini-Manual of the Urban Guerrilla* (Montreal, Canada: Abraham Guillen Press & Arm the Spirit, 2002), 14.

<sup>69</sup> T.E. Lawrence, “The Evolution of a Revolt,” *Army Quarterly and Defense Journal* (October 1920). Reprinted by the Combat Studies Institute, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 11.

<sup>70</sup> Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare*, 39.

<sup>71</sup> Ian Beckett, *Modern Insurgencies and Counter-Insurgencies: Guerrillas and their Opponents since 1750* (London: Routledge, 2001), 81.

<sup>72</sup> U. S. Depart. of the Army, *FM 3-24, Counterinsurgency*, 1-3.

Counterinsurgent intelligence organizations will attempt to exploit local incidents, and in the words of the scholar Robert G. Thompson, also attempt “to sow discord in the insurgent ranks and between the insurgents and the population.”<sup>73</sup> Insurgent leaders must maintain enough of an information advantage such that the efforts of the authority described above are minimized or neutralized.

## **E. CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, the six primary prerequisites for a successful insurgency are

- a cause to fight for
- local populace support
- weakness in the authority
- geographic conditions
- external support
- an information advantage

Having established the primary prerequisites for a successful insurgency, we can now analyze the selected six failed post-World War II insurgencies, in order to determine common characteristics. This information can then be used to better understand and defeat future insurgencies by enabling counterinsurgent forces to develop strategies that take advantage of mistakes in order to promote failure in modern insurgencies.

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<sup>73</sup> Robert G. Thompson, *Studies in International Security: 10, Defeating Communist Insurgency: The Lessons of Malaya and Vietnam* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1966), 94.

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## **IV. CASE STUDIES**

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

This chapter will examine six case studies of post-World War II failed insurgencies: the Greek Civil War (1946-1949), the Philippines – Huk Rebellion (1946-1954), the Malayan Emergency (1948-1960), the Kenya Emergency (1952-1960), Dhofar (1962-1976), and Bolivia (1966-1968). Each case study will begin by first examining the background of the conflict. The background is followed by separate and detailed discussions of the insurgency and counterinsurgency strategies. Then utilizing the information from the prior sections, the prerequisites for a successful insurgency will be used as a framework to examine the insurgency. Each case study will conclude with a discussion of the identified short-comings in the prerequisites for a successful insurgency in order to understand why each insurgency failed.



**Figure 5. Greece (1946-1949)**

(From *Challenge and Response in Internal Conflict, Volume II The Experience in Europe and the Middle East* by D. M. Condit, 1967, 498.)

## **B. THE GREEK CIVIL WAR (1946-1949)**

### **1. Background**

The Greek Civil War, the first of many post-World War II communist insurgencies, occurred between 1946 and 1949. The Government of Greece conducted counterinsurgency operations against the Communist Party of Greece (KKE), the National Liberation Front (EAM), which was an umbrella organization for the KKE, and its primary military force, the National Popular Liberation Army (ELAS). Insurgent and counterinsurgent forces involved in the Greek Civil War are outlined in the figure below in order to alleviate potential confusion due to the numerous abbreviations used in discussing this conflict.

<b><u>Insurgent Forces</u></b>		<b><u>Counterinsurgent Forces</u></b>	
KKE	Communist Party of Greece	GoG	Government of Greece
PDK	Temporary Democratic Government [established Dec 47]	GNA	Greek National Army
EAM	National Liberation Front [an umbrella organization]	JUSMAPG	Joint U.S. Military Advisory and Planning Group
ELAS	National Popular Liberation Army [military arm of EAM]		
DSE	Democratic Army of Greece [replaced ELAS in Oct 46]		

**Figure 6. Greek Civil War Insurgent and Counterinsurgent Forces**

The involvement of the United States in this conflict was an assertion of the Truman Doctrine and played a crucial role in the initial development of the United States' Cold War strategy of containment of the Soviet Union. Historians typically describe this conflict as occurring in three rounds. The first round of the Greek Civil War was marked by fratricidal conflict between the various Greek resistance forces and occurred between 1943 and 1944. The second round was also a period of fratricidal conflict and occurred between December 1, 1944 and January 15, 1945. During this round communist forces transitioned to conventional maneuver warfare during the battle for Athens, the capitol of Greece. The third round occurred between 1946 and 1949. During this final round of the Greek Civil War the Communist Party of Greece guided the armed forces that confronted the established government of Greece.

Prior to the invasion and occupation of Greece in 1941, the KKE was a small unpopular political party. According to the scholar Edgar O'Ballance, the KKE's unpopularity with the Greek populace can be traced to three factors: adherence to the Comintern ideology, support of the Balkan Communist Federation, and advocacy for the autonomy of Macedonia and Thrace. Because of the unpopularity of these KKE positions the party was never able to garner more than ten percent of the votes in any election, and was able to gain seats in the National Assembly only after proportional representation was instituted in the Greek political system.<sup>74</sup> Even so, as the insurgency scholar A. J. Joes has written, the occupation "transformed the Greek Communists into a force capable of attempting an armed revolution, and it opened a long chapter of physical destruction and moral agony for the Greek people."<sup>75</sup>

During the first round, the occupation, the KKE established the only considerable Greek military force, the National Liberation Front (EAM). The EAM was established in Athens in September 1941 as an umbrella organization for KKE military forces. The ability of the KKE to establish this force is attributed to the fact that, having operated under conditions of long-term suppression by the Government of Greece prior to the occupation, the KKE organization had become accustomed to working in secrecy and underground. This institutional knowledge gave the KKE and EAM a distinct advantage over the other resistance movements that would develop later during the occupation.

The military arm of the EAM, the National Popular Liberation Army (ELAS), was established in February 1942, and by November 1943 the ELAS had attacked and dissolved nearly all the anti-communist guerrilla groups formed by army officers in Greece. After the ELAS attacks only two forces remained, the National Democratic Greek League (EDES), founded in 1941, and the National and Social Liberation

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<sup>74</sup> O'Ballance, *The Greek Civil War 1944-49*, 30.

<sup>75</sup> A. J. Joes, *Guerrilla Warfare: A Historical, Biographical, and Bibliographical Sourcebook* (R. Higham, Ed.) (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1996), 69.

(EKKA), founded in 1942. John O. Iatrides, an expert on Greek history, has noted that in 1942 the KKE drafted a plan to seize Athens immediately after the withdrawal of German occupation forces.<sup>76</sup>

After Allied successes in North Africa and the Soviet successes on the Russian front in 1944, German occupation forces evacuated Greece in order to avoid being cut off and isolated. The British and Royal Greek Army forces that would move in to fill the power vacuum created by the rapid retreat of the Germans were initially small in numbers.

The second round began in December 1944 with the ELAS attempting to seize Athens militarily. By the end of December the legitimate Greek authorities retained control of only a very small area in the center of the capitol, Athens. But the Greek and British forces were able to stop the ELAS assault long enough for external reinforcements to be brought into the fight for Athens. The reinforced Greek and British forces then defeated the ELAS. As the communist forces retreated from Athens the decision was made to take thousands of Greek citizens hostage. The scholar Dimitrios G. Kousoulas has noted that “this action, together with the excesses committed by the communists during the revolution, generated a volcanic reaction against them”<sup>77</sup> which was carried over into the third round. The KKE and Greek government leaders signed a truce on 15 January 1945 ending hostilities. The subsequent Varkiza agreement of February 1945 gave the KKE and ELAS an amnesty, a referendum on the future of Greece and a general election. This agreement was advantageous to the KKE since it legitimized the KKE and enabled unimpeded preparation for the third round. During the second round the KKE and EAM leadership had failed to understand that they had lost the external political support of Stalin until it was too late.

In 1945 an electoral victory for the KKE was most unlikely. Intra-party quarrels and defections of key political and military leaders had greatly weakened the KKE as

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<sup>76</sup> John O. Iatrides, “Revolution or Self-Defense? Communist Goals, Strategy, and Tactics in the Greek Civil War,” *Journal of Cold War Studies* 7, No. 3 (Summer 2005): 3-33, 5.

<sup>77</sup> Dimitrios G. Kousoulas, *Revolution and Defeat: The Story of the Greek Communist Party* (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), 215.



they made preparations for the third round. The third round began with the KKE boycotting the national elections for a new parliament in March 1946. In October 1946 the ELAS was effectively replaced with the Democratic Army of Greece (DSE) commanded by the veteran General Markos Vafiadis. The DSE was to operate primarily in the mountains of central and northern Greece.

The Temporary Democratic Government (PDK) was established by the communists in December 1947. In an attempt to seize a capital and gain much needed recognition by other communist governments, the small town of Konitsa along the Albanian border was attacked on 25 December 1947. Guided by the PDK the DSE transformed from operating as a guerrilla organization to operate as an organized conventional force. After the initial assault of Konitsa was repulsed the DSE laid siege to the town. Underestimating the improved expertise, organization, armaments, and strength of the Greek National Army (GNA), the DSE forces were surrounded and 650 men were killed or wounded.<sup>78</sup> Having transformed into a conventional force prematurely, the DSE was now faced with the prospect of a severe loss of morale if they attempted to transform back to a guerilla force. During the summer of 1948 the DSE was driven from many of their mountain strongholds by the GNA. In January 1949, following several severe battlefield defeats and because he strongly advocated a return to guerilla tactics, Markos was replaced by Niko Zachariadis, a politician who was a self proclaimed military leader, who favored conventional warfare. In August and September 1949, Zachariadis made the fatal error of gathering and placing behind fixed defenses his remaining 1,200 men in the communists' last mountain strongholds in the Grammos. The Greek Civil War ended, for all practical purposes, with the Battle of Grammos-Vitsi, in August of 1949. The DSE was forced out of Greece, leaving the GNA in firm control of the entire country.

## **2. Insurgency Strategy**

The KKE and EAM treated the ELAS as their main source of military power beginning in May 1943. During the first round, the occupation, the ELAS minimized its activities against the German occupiers out of fear of the expected severe retaliation against Greek civilians. This also enabled the ELAS to gather strength during the

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<sup>78</sup> Kousoulas, *Revolution and Defeat*, 250.

occupation in anticipation of securing control of Greece when the occupation forces departed. The KKE and ELAS hoped to rapidly fill the resulting power vacuum.

According to O'Ballance, at the beginning of the second round the KKE and ELAS observed "the smallness of the Allied Liberation Force and noted the small fighting content, as well as the fact that it seemed to be more concerned with repairing roads and harbour facilities and distributing UNRRA [United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration] supplies than penetrating into the interior."<sup>79</sup> When fighting finally erupted around Athens, the communists did not have a deliberate plan to occupy the capital. Iatrides wrote that the KKE proved to be indecisive and unprepared to take the necessary military action at this point to gain the initiative.<sup>80</sup> The KKE, in the end, had the ELAS turn to conventional urban maneuver operations in a bid to take Athens in the second round. Simultaneously the ELAS executed missions to destroy all other Greek anti-communist forces. This diverted already limited communist resources from the main effort in Athens. This decision to destroy all other competitors was flawed since the KKE could have easily destroyed all competition once in control of Athens.

According to the scholar Charilaos G. Lagoudakis, the strategic aim of the KKE in the third round was to replace the legitimate Government of Greece with a communist regime.<sup>81</sup> Kousoulas describes the KKE's strategic plan during the third round as based on two major considerations: (1) that the communist states to the north would provide support and; (2) that British forces would be prevented from entering the fight and therefore the KKE would only have to contend with the domestic reaction. The initial insurgent strategy of the third round was based on classic hit-and-run guerilla tactics. According to Kousoulas the tactics were: "selection of target; concentration of forces; surprise attack at night against the gendarmerie station; forcible or voluntary recruitment of young villagers; pillaging of food stuffs; then retreat to mountain hide-outs."<sup>82</sup> At the

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<sup>79</sup> O'Ballance, *The Greek Civil War 1944-49*, 92.

<sup>80</sup> Iatrides, "Revolution or Self-Defense?," 16.

<sup>81</sup> Charilaos G. Lagoudakis, "Greece," in *Challenge and Response in Internal Conflict, Volume II The Experience in Europe and the Middle East* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Research in Social Systems, The American University, 1967), 502.

<sup>82</sup> Kousoulas, *Revolution and Defeat*, 236, 239.

strategic level the KKE also provided support from their headquarters in Athens through propaganda and subversion. This support was to continue until December 1947 when the Greek government finally outlawed the KKE as a political party. With the formation of the PDK, the DSE transitioned to conventional maneuver warfare and sought to gain and retain territory in order to gain legitimacy by being recognized by other communist states.

### **3. The Counterinsurgency Strategy**

During the first round, the German occupation forces were focused on securing the main north-south passage through Greece. Due to limited resources and forces the Germans were thus unable to aggressively execute a counterinsurgency campaign. During the second round the British and Greek Army forces were unable to conduct effective counterinsurgency operations. The strategy was to retain Athens and work to stabilize Greece. The KKE's decision to have the ELAS fight in a conventional manner in an urban environment played to the British and Greek Army forces' strengths.

During the initial stages of the third round the Greek government depended primarily on the Gendarmerie to deal with the insurgent activities in the rural areas. In August 1946 it was apparent to the Government of Greece that the Gendarmerie was overwhelmed and the Greek Army was deployed to deal with the insurgent forces. According to Lagoudakis, the Government of Greece was also unable to take advantage of the popular support of the populace "because it lacked security forces trained to deal with the increasing infiltration of guerilla bands along Greece's northern borders."<sup>83</sup> Kousoulas wrote that due to lack of both experience and personnel, the leadership of the Greek Army and their British advisors adopted two tactics: static defense and short duration cleaning up operations. The first tactic, static defense, proved to be costly and ineffective. Lacking a mobile force to reinforce besieged villages; communist forces were able to select villages for attack that they could overwhelm. Greek forces from nearby villages were unable to provide support out of fear of ambush enroute or having their own unprotected village attacked while they were providing assistance. The second tactic, short duration cleaning up operations, was not costly in human life, but was extremely ineffective. This tactic consisted of developing a prescribed timetable for a

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<sup>83</sup> Lagoudakis, "Greece," 509.

target area. No matter the situation, the Greek Army withdrew its troops according to the timetable.<sup>84</sup> As the strength of the insurgent forces became more apparent the British and American forces increased support of both material and training support to the besieged Greek Government.

As the flow of resources increased it became obvious by December that the GNA could not effectively distribute or plan the use of these resources. On 15 July 1947, the initial American Aid Mission to Greece was established. Then in November 1947 a joint Greek-American staff, the Joint U.S. Military Advisory and Planning Group (JUSMAPG), was established to orchestrate the fight against the communists. This effectively made the planning of military operations in Greece an American responsibility.

Hit and run tactics of the communists during the initial phases of the third round had lowered the morale of the Greek Army. Western Allied funds, advisors and equipment now were flooding into the country, and under Western Allied guidance a series of major offensives were launched in the mountains of central Greece. Although these offensives did not achieve all their objectives, they inflicted some serious defeats on the DSE. Army morale rose, and the morale of the DSE fighters, many of whom had been forcibly conscripted, fell correspondingly. The development of commando units proved to be effective in helping the Government of Greece regain the initiative. As Lagoudakis wrote, "Their offensive spirit...inspired confidence among government forces and among the loyal civilian populace."<sup>85</sup> With American assistance, the GNA was able to increase its strength to 150,000 in the third round<sup>86</sup> just as the communist forces were struggling to recruit and retain personnel. The Government of Greece faced a maximum of 28,000 active communist insurgents.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> Kousoulas, *Revolution and Defeat*, 241.

<sup>85</sup> Lagoudakis, "Greece," 509.

<sup>86</sup> Lagoudakis, "Greece," 510.

<sup>87</sup> Lagoudakis, "Greece," 512.

#### **4. Prerequisites of Successful Insurgencies**

##### ***a. A Cause to Fight For***

The KKE lacked a cause that would generate support amongst the Greek populace. The KKE did not effectively identify an existing domestic issue and exploit it to create a cause that would appeal to the populace. The Greek communists failed because they failed to identify an issue and exploit it to create a cause that appealed to the populace. A cause based on the communist ideology of the KKE was at odds with Greek culture and failed to win the support of the populace; therefore, the prerequisite for a successful insurgency, a cause to fight for, was a significant disadvantage for the KKE throughout the insurgency.

##### ***b. Local Populace Support***

The communist alienation of the peasantry was a major factor in their failure. Support by the Greek populace was dissipated by the communist approach to party discipline. Military historian Charles R. Shrader observed that the communists' overdependence upon executions, forcible conscription, confiscation of resources, and the use of terror to sustain the insurgency and force the local populace to support the KKE was very unproductive.<sup>88</sup>

The communists lost much passive and overt support from the Greek populace immediately following their defeat at the end of the second round. O'Ballance wrote that as evidence of communists' atrocities became known the populace of Greece was horrified. The harsh treatment, refusal to release, and even killing of hostages by the communist forces aroused the dislike of the majority and lost the support of sections of the populace that might have otherwise been attracted to their cause.<sup>89</sup>

In the autumn of 1948 Markos wrote "since the middle of 1947, recruitment to the DSE was achieved almost entirely by force."<sup>90</sup> The DSE increasingly used forcible conscription to acquire recruits from the local populace. According to the military historian Ian Beckett the DSE started to become over reliant upon the

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<sup>88</sup> Charles R. Shrader, *The Withered Vine: Logistics and the Communist Insurgency in Greece, 1945-1949* (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, 1999), 258-259.

<sup>89</sup> O'Ballance, *The Greek Civil War 1944-49*, 111.

<sup>90</sup> Kousoulas, *Revolution and Defeat*, 252.

Slavophones of Macedonia, who established the Slavomacedonian Liberating Front (SNOF) in 1944. The Slavophones were a portion of the Greek populace that was alienated from the Greek society.<sup>91</sup> The lack of an appealing cause severely hampered the ability of the communists to recruit and retain manpower from the local populace. It is safe to assume that the lack of appeal of the Communist ideology to the local populace also hindered recruitment efforts.

One of the most effective countermeasures that the Government of Greece executed was the removal of large sections of the populace from the unsecured frontiers. When the Government of Greece displaced the populace from the unsecured frontiers, the communists lost not only potential recruits, supplies, and information, but more importantly, the initiative.

The prerequisite for a successful insurgency, local populace support, was a limited disadvantage for the KKE immediately following the second round. The harsh treatment of the Greek populace combined with the use of terror to coerce the populace quickly changed this prerequisite to a significant disadvantage for the KKE for the remainder of the insurgency.

**c. *Weakness in the Authority***

According to Kousoulas, at the beginning of the third round the Greek economy was disorganized; the civil service, poorly paid, was infiltrated with communist sympathizers and was inefficient; and the army was infiltrated and lacked both the organization and expertise to wage an effective counterinsurgency campaign.<sup>92</sup> The ability of the KKE to remain a legal political party following their defeat in the second round is an indication of the weakness in the authority at that time. O'Ballance also noted that pressure by the British "on the Greek Government to rule democratically – which meant allowing the Communist Party to operate openly ... played into the hands of the KKE."<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> Beckett, *Modern Insurgencies and Counter-Insurgencies*, 87-88.

<sup>92</sup> Kousoulas, *Revolution and Defeat*, 237.

<sup>93</sup> O'Ballance, *The Greek Civil War 1944-49*, 119.

The prerequisite for a successful insurgency, weakness in the authority, was a significant advantage for the KKE initially. Greek government and security forces were vulnerable and unprepared to defeat an aggressive insurgency at the beginning of the third round. American material and technical assistance throughout the third round was to prove decisive in developing a more effective government and counterinsurgency effort against the communist insurgents. Though the communists lost the initiative in the third round largely due to this external assistance, the Greek government and military still leaned heavily on American advisors. For this reason this prerequisite is considered to have been a limited advantage for the KKE even as the communist forces were being defeated. The communists were just unable to leverage this limited advantage to their benefit.

***d. Geographic Conditions***

The geography of Greece, sparse, barren, and largely uninhabited, was almost perfect for insurgency operations. The DSE had the advantage of terrain operating primarily in the mountains of central and northern Greece. O'Ballance wrote, there are "twenty-six separate mountain ranges in which looking for small bodies of guerrillas is like searching for needles in haystacks."<sup>94</sup> The guerrilla hit-and-run tactics took advantage of the available terrain. In mid-1948 the guerrilla forces' geographic advantage was mitigated by their adoption of a strategy of attempting to retain territorial gains. Instead of continuing hit-and-run tactics the communists organized static defensive positions that the numerically superior GNA was able to effectively surround and destroy. The insurgency had given the initiative back to the Government of Greece and failed to take advantage of their mobility and international borders.

The prerequisite for a successful insurgency, geographic conditions, was a significant advantage for the communists throughout the Greek Civil War. Though the Yugoslavian border was closed in third round the communists still had a significant advantage because of their ability to freely cross the Albanian and Bulgarian borders to seek sanctuary. The fact that the communists chose a poor strategy of attempting to retain terrain against a numerically superior force, versus taking advantage of the geography of

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<sup>94</sup> O'Ballance, *The Greek Civil War 1944-49*, 207.

Greece, especially the mountainous terrain, does not change the fact that the geographic conditions were still a significant advantage for the communists at the end of the insurgency. The Greek communists just failed to take advantage of the geography.

*e. External Support*

The establishment of the Temporary Democratic Government (PDK) in December 1947 was an international embarrassment for the Greek Communist Party when not even the Soviet Union recognized the PDK as a legitimate government. This political failure was to greatly affect future external support from neighboring communist countries.

The Yugoslav, Albanian, and Bulgarian governments supported the Greek communist movement with sanctuary and supplies. According to Lagoudakis, “Except for the initial stock of weapons hidden at the end of World War II, virtually all arms and equipment came from outside Greece.”<sup>95</sup> Though the KKE met with representatives of the Soviet Union several times, the Soviets provided no direct support. It was not part of Stalin's strategy to start a war over Greece; in fact, as Kousoulas points out, the “Stalin-Churchill understanding of October 1944 had placed Greece unconditionally within the British sphere of interest.”<sup>96</sup> The leaders of the KKE and DSE waited throughout the third round for the support of the Soviet Union, support that was to never materialize.

A decisive factor in the calculations of the KKE leadership was the support of Albania, Bulgaria, and Yugoslavia at the beginning of the third round. Already a poor and rather undeveloped country, the occupation and subsequent civil war reduced the internal resources of Greece to the degree that the DSE found it difficult to obtain locally even its most basic needs. This lack of resources forced the DSE to purchase or acquisition needed supplies locally and become over dependent on external support which could oftentimes be quite tenuous. Charles R. Shrader, an expert on the logistics of the Greek Civil War wrote that “The Greek rebels, unable to find or produce significant

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<sup>95</sup> Lagoudakis, “Greece,” 506.

<sup>96</sup> Kousoulas, *Revolution and Defeat*, 223.



military resources internally, had to rely almost entirely on the logistical support by Albania, Bulgaria, and Yugoslavia.”<sup>97</sup>

The departure of the Yugoslavian communist leader, Josip Broz Tito, from the Cominform and his move towards a less militant policy towards the United States and Great Britain prevented any direct military intervention by Tito in support of the Greek Communists. In July 1949 Tito closed the Yugoslavian frontier, and denied further sanctuary to the DSE. The loss of their principal external support base and sanctuary greatly impacted the DSE’s ability to effectively operate.

The prerequisite for a successful insurgency, external support, was a limited advantage for the communists initially. The closing of the Yugoslavian border coupled with the extremely limited material support actually provided to the Greek communists from external sources resulted in this limited advantage becoming a significant disadvantage by the end of the insurgency.

*f. Information Advantage*

The KKE and its military forces had an information advantage over the Government of Greece and its military forces until mid-way through the third round. Following the defeat in the second round the KKE was recognized as a legitimate political party by the Varkiza Pact. Because the KKE was a legitimate Greek political party it could openly publish its own newspapers and other publications. This enabled the KKE to more effectively spread its subversive propaganda. This information advantage vanished with the establishment of the PDK. At this point the information advantage passed to the counterinsurgency forces because propaganda was no longer enough to hide the true intentions of the KKE from the populace.

The separation of the communists from the populace, through mass relocations of the Greek populace, further restricted the flow of timely and accurate information. The premature adoption of conventional war by the communists was a result of the poor information collected by the PDK and DSE. The above countermeasures by the Government of Greece in the third round greatly restricted the communists’ ability to effectively collect, analyze, and disseminate intelligence. Inaccurate and out-of-date

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<sup>97</sup> Shrader, *The Withered Vine*, xiv.

information on the GNA led the communists to believe that it was time to transform to conventional warfare and seize victory. The communists believed that the GNA morale was low and the American military aid was not yet a decisive factor. In truth, the GNA in the summer and autumn of 1948 had been greatly transformed, in the words of the scholar O'Ballance, because of "the amounts of American material absorbed, the improved state of training, sounder planning, better staff work and a more aggressive policy and attitude generally."<sup>98</sup>

The prerequisite for a successful insurgency, information advantage, was a significant advantage for the Greek communists initially. The effective separation of the communists from the Greek populace due to the Government of Greece's relocation programs resulted in a significant loss of intelligence for the Greek communists. This loss of intelligence was great enough to reduce this prerequisite to a significant disadvantage by the middle of the third round.













## **5. Conclusion**

The KKE's defeat in 1949 stemmed from several factors rather than any one cause. Three of these factors the KKE had little or no control over: (1) the improved morale, efficiency, and capability of the Greek government and security forces after 1947 due to American material aid and training; (2) the dependence on external support due to the limited internal resources of Greece; and (3) Stalin's decision to not support the KKE directly.





There were numerous factors that the KKE had control over: (1) the strict adherence to the communist ideology rather than identifying a domestic issue and developing a cause that the populace would support; (2) alienating the Greek populace; (3) not using existing geographic conditions to take advantage of their mobility and retain the initiative against a numerically superior force; (4) failure to back Tito and retain external support; (5) loss of the information advantage in the third round resulted in the decision to prematurely transform to conventional maneuver and attempt to retain territory; and (6) failure to heed Soviet advice prior to the second round to not expand the struggle and concentrate on the mass political struggle.

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<sup>98</sup> O'Ballance, *The Greek Civil War 1944-49*, 213.

Prerequisites for a successful insurgency	Initial	Final
A Cause to Fight For		
Local Populace Support		
Weakness in the Authority		
Geographic Conditions		
External Support		
Information Advantage		

**Legend**

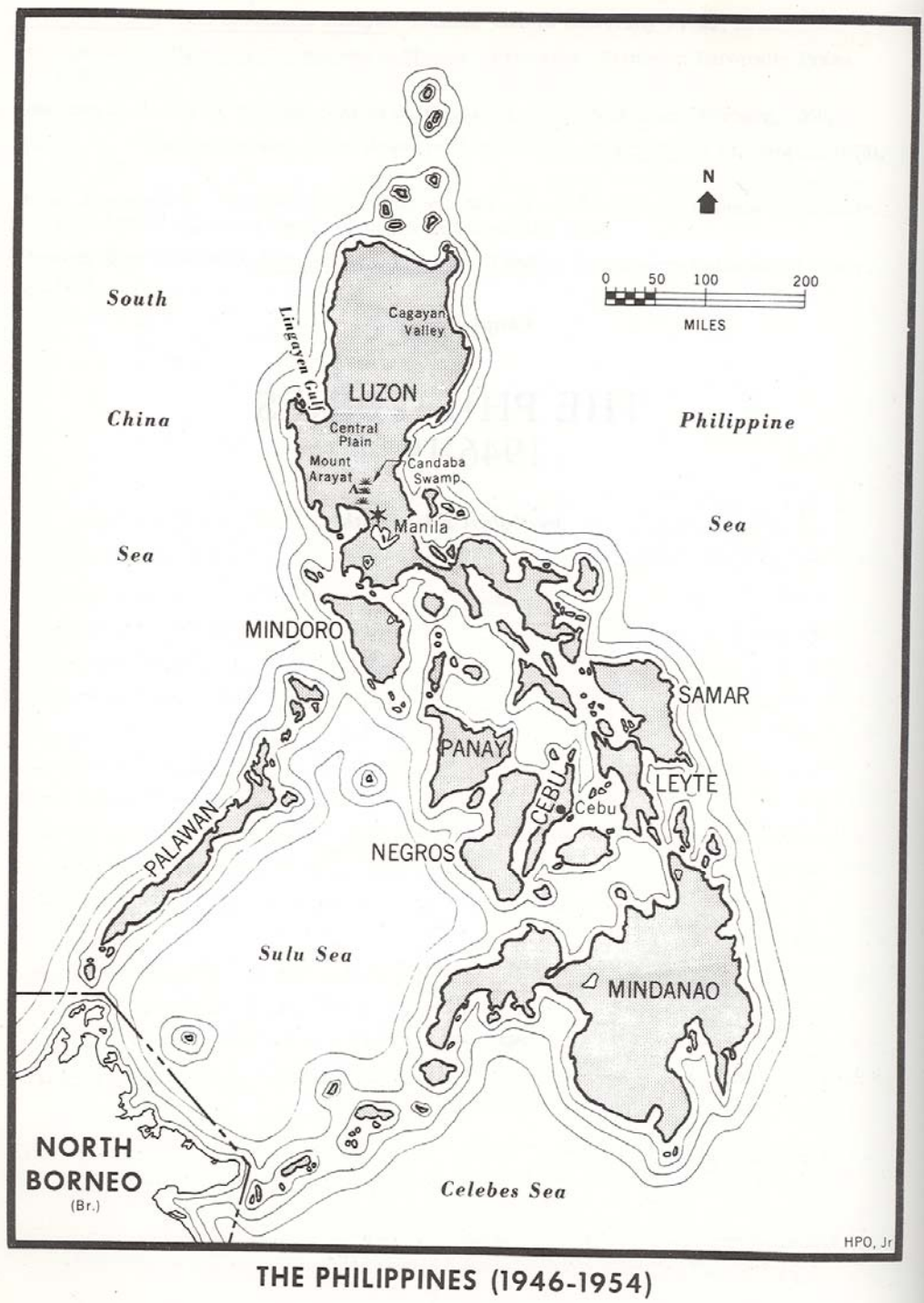
-  Significant Advantage
-  Limited Advantage
-  Limited Disadvantage
-  Significant Disadvantage

**Figure 7. Greek Civil War Prerequisites for a Successful Insurgency Chart**

Finally, using a Likert scale to examine the Greek Civil War against the prerequisites for a successful insurgency it becomes obvious that the KKE initially had three significant advantages, weakness in authority, geographic conditions, and information advantage. The KKE initially, also, had a limited advantage in the prerequisite external support.

The KKE's significant disadvantage in the prerequisite for a successful insurgency, a cause to fight for, coupled with the reduction of the prerequisites local populace support, external support, and information advantage, to the status of significant disadvantage guaranteed the defeat of the communists in the Greek Civil War.

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**Figure 8. The Philippines (1946-1954)**

(From *Challenge and Response in Internal Conflict, Volume I The Experience in Asia* by D. M. Condit, 1967, 474)

## C. PHILIPPINES (HUK REBELLION) (1946-1954)

### 1. Background

The Hukbalahap movement began in 1942 in response to the harsh Japanese occupation of the Philippines. The origins of this movement were rooted in the country's pre-colonial period and the result of numerous internal Philippine conditions. The term Hukbalahap is an abbreviation of the Filipino term *Hukbo ng Bayan Laban sa mga Hapon* which means "Army of Resistance Against Japan." The Hukbalahap movement is often referred to as the Huk Rebellion. The scholar Eduardo Lachica argues, that immediately following the liberation of the Philippines, the Huks under "Communist leadership saw a chance to seize national power at a time when the newly-proclaimed Philippine Republic was in obvious distress as a result of a monetary crisis, graft in high office and mounting peasant unrest."<sup>99</sup> Though this argument is compelling to historians, it fails to take into consideration the disinformation campaign waged against the Huk movement's reputation, the failure of the American and Philippine governments to integrate the Huk leaders into the political process, the obvious corruption of the Philippine government, and finally, the government sponsored victimization of the rural agrarian peasant class.

The truth is that the Huks realized that the Philippine populace was war weary, and therefore the Huks initially intended to peacefully demobilize. But during the closing months of the liberation in 1945, U.S. forces turned against the Huks. In his detailed and well researched book on the Huk Rebellion historian Benedict J. Kerkvliet argues that the Huks were arrested by government troops, and members of peasant organizations who petitioned for better conditions were openly victimized by landlords and police.<sup>100</sup>

The scholar William Chapman identifies three critical events which forced the Huks in 1946 to initiate an insurgency against the Philippine government.<sup>101</sup> The first was the fact that the U.S. Armed Forces in the Far East had decided that the Huk

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<sup>99</sup> Eduardo Lachica, *The Huks: Philippine Agrarian Society in Revolt* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1971), 5.

<sup>100</sup> Benedict J. Kerkvliet, *The Huk Rebellion: A Study of Peasant Revolt in the Philippines* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), 110.

<sup>101</sup> William Chapman, *Inside the Philippine Revolution*, (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1987), 60-62.

resistance movement was a communist organization that desired to overthrow any democratic government in order to establish a socialist state. In an effort to disrupt the perceived threat the U.S. Army's Counter Intelligence Corp (CIC) ordered Huk units to demobilize, disarm, and disperse to their homes. The CIC also jailed several prominent Huk leaders. Many Huks retained their arms and fled to the mountains rightly perceiving that they were now hunted as outlaws.

The second event was the return of the Central Luzon landowners. Many landowners had sought refuge in Manila in 1942, but now they had returned, planning on picking up where they had left off. As the landlords demanded back rent, they realized that they now faced a much better organized peasant resistance movement. Assisting the landowners in their attempt to reassert their preoccupation rights and dismantle the new political force, the Philippine military police took an extremely heavy handed approach against the peasant classes of Luzon.

The third event was the 1946 election for congress of all six Democratic Alliance (DA) candidates, one of which was a local Huk hero, Luis Taruc. None of the DA candidates were allowed to take office. Eduardo Lachica posits that the ejection, by the Philippine Commission on Elections, of the six DA candidates was due to the highly doubtful circumstances they won under.<sup>102</sup> But the Commission on Elections failed to give equal consideration towards investigating the campaign of terror conducted by Roxas supporters in the Central Plains of Luzon. Kerkvliet further argues that the ejection of the DA candidates was actually due to the concerted efforts of the Huk movement's primary enemies; the wealthy landowners of Luzon, collaborators from the occupation, Philippine constabulary, American and Philippine government officials eager to maintain the status quo, and those that wanted to believe that the Huks were dangerous because they were communists.<sup>103</sup> In the words of the scholar Lachica, "The ejection of the DA congressmen turned Central Luzon into a seething cauldron,"<sup>104</sup> and left President Roxas in control of the Philippines at the national level. The overt and corrupt actions taken by

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<sup>102</sup> Lachica, *The Huks*, 120.

<sup>103</sup> Kerkvliet, *The Huk Rebellion*, 110.

<sup>104</sup> Lachica, *The Huks*, 121.

Roxas and his supporters gained further sympathy for the Huk movement. In May 1946 Luis Taruc re-established the Huk movement's headquarters and began re-building the military force. After several set backs, President Roxas realized that his military was not prepared to destroy the Huk movement. Though there was a truce between the upper levels of the Philippine government and the senior leaders of the Huk movement, the violence continued to escalate through 1946. In early 1947, the Philippine military executed operations against the main Huk strongholds in Luzon with little success. Throughout 1947 to 1948 the Huks reduced operations and focused on expanding the movement's military and political forces. Finally, in March 1948, President Roxas declared the Huk movement an illegal and subversive organization and had the constabulary step up counterinsurgency activities. Then in April 1948, President Roxas died and Vice President Elpidio Quirino assumed power. Initially it appeared that Quirino wished solve the Huk problem through truce, amnesty and conciliation. President Quirino even let Luis Taruc take his seat in the Congress. But at the same time President Quirino had the Philippine military continue operations against the Huks. Finally in August 1948, Luis Taruc left Manila and openly declared armed revolt against the Philippine government.

The political and military strength of the Huk movement peaked between 1949 and 1951. The violence and corruption associated with President Quirino's reelection in November 1949 served to greatly increase support for the Huks among the peasants of Luzon. By September 1950 the Huks were in virtual control of Central Luzon, often referred to as *Huklandia*. In 1950 the Huks also changed the movement's name to *Hukbong Magpapalaya ng Bayan*, the "People's Liberation Army" (HMB).

Two events are attributed to the Huk movement's loss of momentum in early 1951 that ultimately led to their defeat. The first was President Quirino's appointment of Ramón Magsaysay, as the Secretary of National Defense in September 1950. Magsaysay was given the responsibility of reorganizing all Philippine security forces into an effective counterinsurgency force. The second was in April 1949, the death of Aurora Quezon, ex-President Quezon's widow, and of her family during a Huk ambush of the



convoy they were traveling in. Mrs. Quezon's death reduced support from the local populace for the Huk movement.

William Chapman notes that insurgent operations by the Huks during the Japanese occupation attained a legendary status among the local populace of Central Luzon by the end of World War II.<sup>105</sup> The Huks in February 1942 are estimated to have numbered 300 and by September to have increased their force to 3000. The Huk movement peaked at 12,800 personnel in 1950. A series of defeats then reduced the force to an estimated 4,000 by October 1952.<sup>106</sup> Luis Taruc, who had held the post of Commander-in-Chief continuously since the activation of the Huks in 1942, was relieved following a series of significant defeats by the counterinsurgent forces. Eduardo Lachica argues that Luis Taruc was worried about needlessly shedding the blood of his followers. For this reason Taruc, in 1954 surrendered to the Philippine government rather than continue on what he believed to be a suicidal course for the Huk movement, and by the following year the insurgency was no longer a threat to the Philippine government, as the remaining Huk leaders were either killed, captured or forced to surrender.<sup>107</sup>

## **2. Insurgency Strategy**

In August 1948, the insurgent leaders of the Hukbalahap movement did not believe that the necessary conditions existed for initiating a successful insurgency. The Huk leaders felt that they must focus on three areas in order to set the proper conditions for initiating a successful insurgency. First, the Huk's civilian mass base had to be expanded. Second, peasants and workers had to be convinced that armed struggle was the only remaining option. Third, the Huk military and political organization had to be improved and expanded. The numerous missteps, especially the mistreatment of the peasants by the military, provided much indirect help to the Huks in convincing the populace to support the armed revolt. The historian Robert R. Smith argues that the corruption of the elections of 1949 left the peasants with no doubt that their only hope for change was through armed revolt. The objectives of the Huk insurgent leaders were to use military force to overthrow the corrupt Philippine government, and then to establish a

<sup>105</sup> Chapman, *Inside the Philippine Revolution*, 59.

<sup>106</sup> Lachica, *The Huks*, 14.

<sup>107</sup> Lachica, *The Huks*, 88, 135.

communist people's democracy. With the continuing improvements in the Huk's military and political organizations insurgent leaders expected to topple the Philippine government by the end of 1951.<sup>108</sup>

Smith's research identified that insurgent tactical operations consisted primarily of raids and ambushes. The Huks executed three types of raids: (1) assaults against Philippine Army positions; (2) raids in urban areas with the objective of liquidating village mayors and other government officials; and (3) standard offensive operations to intimidate the civilian populace. The Huks normally chose suitable terrain for ambushes. Mountainous or hilly terrain with thick vegetation which provided easy concealment and safe withdrawal was the most desirable. The Huks usually focused on small government detachments or supply convoys, but would ambush much larger Philippine government forces if the terrain and situation facilitated a safe and rapid withdrawal from the engagement area. Emphasizing mobility the Huks employed the hit-and-run technique in both ambushes and raids. This technique enabled the Huks to avoid major clashes and retain the initiative. By withdrawing rapidly, they kept their limited forces intact and discouraged the Philippine forces when their pursuits proved fruitless. Sabotage was rarely used by the Huks out of fear of alienating the populace. They also did not wish to destroy communications facilities that they used themselves, and more importantly lacked the training and expertise to execute sabotage operations effectively.<sup>109</sup>

The use of terrorist attacks by the Huk movement was sporadic after the liberation of the Philippines, primarily due to the Huk leaders debating the wisdom of the use of terrorism as a tactic. The Huk movement initially used terrorist attacks against individual vehicles and individuals traveling in Huk controlled areas to demonstrate to the local populace the strength of the Huk movement. The use of terror as a tactic against individual vehicles and individuals was re-examined by the Huk movement leadership after the public condemnation of the death of the widow of ex-President Quezon during a Huk ambush in April 1949. Following the 1949 election the Huk movement did intensify

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<sup>108</sup> Robert R. Smith, "The Philippines (1946-1954)," in *Challenge and Response in Internal Conflict, Volume I The Experience in Asia* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Research in Social Systems, The American University, 1967), 486-489.

<sup>109</sup> Smith, "The Philippines (1946-1954)," 489-490.

terrorist attacks on villages. The scholar Andrew R. Molnar posits that these attacks focusing on villages were intended to extend the area under Huk control and to demonstrate to the local populace the movement's aversion to landlords.<sup>110</sup>

### **3. The Counterinsurgency Strategy**

In 1945 American forces moved to disarm Huk units in Central Luzon, removed local governments organized by the Huks, and arrested many of the high ranking Huk leaders such as Luis Taruc. During the years 1946 to 1950, the Philippine government was able to marshal only 24,000 poorly equipped paramilitary police of the Department of Interior's Constabulary against the Huk movement. Molnar argues that the Philippine regular Army forces until 1951 were ill-equipped, unorganized for sustained combat, and, most importantly, primarily staffed by inept and corrupt officers, and therefore it played only a minor role in the counterinsurgency until late 1950.<sup>111</sup>

President Quirino appointed the 43 year old congressman, Ramón Magsaysay, as the Secretary of National Defense in September 1950. With no formal military training, but an extensive background in guerrilla warfare, he immediately took charge of Philippine counterinsurgency operations and began to reorganize the entire security forces of the Philippines. Then Magsaysay ordered the Police Constabulary placed under Army control on 23 December 1950. Lawrence M. Greenberg, an expert on the Hukbalahap insurgency, points out that this organizational and command relationship was to remain in effect for the duration of the insurgency and was ultimately critical to the execution of successful counterinsurgency operations.<sup>112</sup>

Magsaysay's efforts to develop an effective counterinsurgency force were greatly assisted when the United States sent to the Philippines a Joint U.S. Military Assistance Group (JUSMAG). The JUSMAG provided not only much needed expertise, but more importantly substantial loans to help Magsaysay implement his desired counterinsurgency programs. Financing from the United States enabled Magsaysay to

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<sup>110</sup> Andrew R. Molnar, & et. al., "Philippines (1946-1954)," in *Undergrounds in Insurgent, Revolutionary, and Resistance Warfare* (Washington, D.C.: The American University, 1963), 323.

<sup>111</sup> Molnar, "Philippines (1946-1954)," 313.

<sup>112</sup> Lawrence M. Greenberg, *Hukbalahap Insurrection: A Case Study of a Successful Anti-Insurgency Operation in the Philippines--1946-1955* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 1987), 88.

implement social and civic programs primarily focused at the Huk's stronghold, Central Luzon.

The year of 1950 was to mark the apex of the Huk Rebellion's strength. In 1951 a revamped Philippine Army with improved leadership, organization, and equipment gained the initiative. With the more effective counterinsurgent forces "killing Huks at the rate of 40 to 50 a week"<sup>113</sup> the insurgents were becoming demoralized. The Huks were constantly on the run. Failure by the Huks to expand their movement beyond the Central Plains of Luzon enabled the counterinsurgent forces to concentrate their forces on that area. The Huks also now faced a more effective Philippine counterinsurgency force: a better trained force, generally led by competent military leaders.

Andrew R. Molnar argues that the key to Magsaysay's successful counterinsurgency efforts was his directive requiring the Philippine military to perform civic and social welfare missions. These missions were in addition to on-going military operations against the Huks. The Philippine forces were able to develop cohesion and integrate all military, government, and non-governmental operations by assigning a civil affairs officer to every military unit. These officers also maintained liaison with civilian home guard units and local barrio police officials.<sup>114</sup> After Magsaysay defeated President Quirino in the 1953 Presidential election, he continued to effectively expand his counterinsurgency campaign against the Huks.

#### **4. Prerequisites of Successful Insurgencies**

##### ***a. A Cause to Fight For***

The Huk movement exploited the issues of land reform and government corruption to create two causes that the populace could support. Land reform was the major issue which the Huks were able to effectively exploit to gain the support of the populace in the Central Plains of Luzon. This cause was primarily focused on the rural agrarian class peasants, and held little appeal to the urban class. In describing the "Land Problem," Luis Taruc wrote:

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<sup>113</sup> Lachica, *The Huks*, 131.

<sup>114</sup> Molnar, "Philippines (1946-1954)," 326.

Thus, for centuries, “land for the landless” has been the peasants’ cry, and the peasants’ hunger for land has been our nation’s most pressing problem. This has led to the common saying among our people that social justice can be achieved only by one of two ways: either a land reform or revolution. Our history of the past four centuries is one of successive uprisings, and their basic cause has always been the peasants’ hunger for land.<sup>115</sup>

The corruption of the Philippine government was an issue that had wider appeal with both the rural and urban populace perceiving extensive government corruption. Initially the harsh actions taken by the Philippine government against the Huks were perceived as unjustified by the populace of the Central Plains of Luzon. Their aggressive actions versus the Japanese established a hero status for the Huks among the general populace of Central Luzon. The hostility of the American forces toward the Huks during the closing months of the liberation of the Philippines in 1945 served to only increase support for the Huk movement. The 1949 elections were a confirmation to the populace of the widespread corruption of the Philippine government. At all levels it was filled with those who had collaborated with the Japanese and members from resistance groups that did not take aggressive action against the Japanese occupation forces.

Both of these causes were greatly weakened by Magsaysay’s aggressive economic, political, social, and military reforms between 1951 and 1954. Because most of the Huk support came from the agrarian peasant class, Magsaysay initially focused both civic and military actions on agrarian reforms. Near the end of 1950 the Economic Development Corps (EDCOR) program was initiated by the Philippine government. This program’s objective was to rehabilitate and resettle Huk prisoners and their families with the goal of inducing defections from the Huks. Andrew R. Molnar posits that the psychological effect of the EDCOR program on the Huk movement and the populace was great. This program provided Huk members with an alternative to fighting and the populace gained new respect for the government. Huk defections due to this program resulted in increased intelligence for counterinsurgency forces.<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> Luis Taruc, *He Who Rides the Tiger: The Story of an Asian Guerilla Fighter* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1967), 12.

<sup>116</sup> Molnar, “Philippines (1946-1954),” 328-329.

During the 1951 elections Magsaysay took extraordinary efforts to guarantee Philippine voters that their voting rights were protected. Reforms to increase the legitimacy of the Philippine government in the words of Andrew R. Molnar, “led to the turning of the tide of public opinion toward the government.”<sup>117</sup> By 1952 Magsaysay’s judicial reform efforts had also impacted the ability of the Huks to exploit the land reform issue as a cause for continuing the insurgency. In cases involving the charge of exploitation by landowners, peasants were offered counsel at government expense, if so desired.

Though the Huks initially had a significant advantage in the prerequisite for a successful insurgency, a cause to fight for, primarily due to government missteps to include mistreatment of peasants and corruption, this advantage was wiped away by the social, civic, and military policies of Magsaysay. The success of Magsaysay’s policies in Central Luzon, coupled with the deterioration of the Huk’s treatment of the populace resulted in this prerequisite becoming a limited disadvantage for the Huks by 1954.

***b. Local Populace Support***

The Huk movement’s strength lay in its mass base of rural agrarian peasants in the Central Plains of Luzon. The Confederation of Peasants (PKM) was one of the principal mass-support bases of the Huk insurgent movement from 1946 to 1954. The Central Plains of Luzon with its social and cultural conditions proved to be a very hospitable environment for the Huks, but the Huk leadership failed to understand that the urban populace was less likely to support their causes.

Several government missteps helped the Huk movement gain the popular support of the populace. The assassination of the Feleo, a Huk leader, by armed men in Philippine Military Police uniforms in August 1949 added to the growing discontent with the Philippine government. Shortly after the assassination of Feleo, President Roxas announced his “iron fist” policy. This policy was to destroy the Huk movement in sixty days, but it also took strong measures against the peasants of Luzon, which resulted in increased support for the Huk movement. The overtly corrupt national elections of 1949 confirmed peasant perceptions that the Philippine government was corrupt.

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<sup>117</sup> Molnar, “Philippines (1946-1954),” 325.

In Huk controlled areas supplies such as food were provided by the local populace. Most weapons that the Huk movement utilized were obtained during World War II. Additional weapons and ammunition were captured or purchased through bribes from government security forces. Molnar has identified that as Magsaysay's counterinsurgency efforts became more effective the Huks were forced to resort to raiding the populace for needed supplies.<sup>118</sup>

The Huks lost the support of the local populace following the fraudulent 1949 elections because of an over reliance on needless violence as a method of coercion. A key incident was the death of Mrs. Aurora Quezon, the widow of the late president, her daughter, and son-in-law in a Huk ambush. With increased terrorism by the Huks the populace of Central Luzon fled to the major cities for security.

Efforts to expand the Huk movement beyond the Central Plains of Luzon were generally met with failure. One of the reasons for the failure to expand was the fact that supporters and members of the Huk movement primarily spoke Pampango. The Pampango speaking area was limited to the fertile plain of the Central Plain of Luzon. Audiences of non-Pampango speakers were not receptive to the Huk members trying to articulate their cause. The Huk Rebellion expert, Kerkvliet, also argues that a second reason was the fact that the Huks usually sent their most poorly trained and undisciplined members on expansion missions.<sup>119</sup>

A general battle weariness among the members of the Huk movement and supporters had set in by early 1951. Supporting the insurgency was a serious strain on the populace of Central Luzon. By 1952 peasants were complaining about sharing their limited food resources with the Huks. The Huks were forced to resort more and more to coercion in order to acquire needed supplies; thus, hurting the people they were supposed to be protecting, and alienating supporters.

The Huk movement initially had a significant advantage in the prerequisite for a successful insurgency, local populace support, primarily due to government

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<sup>118</sup> Molnar, "Philippines (1946-1954)," 322.

<sup>119</sup> Kerkvliet, *The Huk Rebellion*, 235.

corruption, mistreatment of the peasants, and the perception among the populace of unfair treatment of the Huks following the occupation. The success of Magsaysay's social, civic, and military policies in Central Luzon, coupled with the deterioration of the Huk's treatment of the populace resulted in this prerequisite becoming a significant disadvantage for the Huks by 1954.

*c. Weakness in the Authority*

Until the appointment of Ramon Magsaysay, as the Secretary of National Defense in September 1950, the Huk insurgent movement was able to develop unimpeded by the corrupt and incompetent Philippine government. A faulty Philippine government policy of empowering the local populace to make decisions reference battling the insurgency locally enabled the Huks to continue to retain the initiative. The Huks had infiltrated the Philippine government at the local level to the point that in Huk controlled areas the police and municipal administrators worked for the Huk movement. In these areas the Huks had assumed many of the functions of the state; administration, collecting taxes, schools, and courts to establish justice. The Huks also had limited control of several fringe areas. The scholar Molnar argues that by day these areas were controlled by the Philippine government, but at night the Huks were in control.<sup>120</sup>

The Philippine government at all levels could be accurately described as weak in its efforts to combat the Huk movement prior to Magsaysay's appointment. Magsaysay's efforts to improve the effectiveness of the Philippine counterinsurgency forces, coupled with several effective civic and social welfare projects, and judicial reform, greatly increased the local populace's confidence in the Philippine government. The research of Kerkvliet shows that by 1952 government forces were able to cause greater damage to the Huk movement, while simultaneously reducing the mistreatment of peasants by government forces.<sup>121</sup>

The Huk movement initially had a significant advantage in the prerequisite for a successful insurgency, weakness in the authority, due to wide-spread government corruption, mistreatment of the peasants, poor economy, and a military that was poorly

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<sup>120</sup> Molnar, "Philippines (1946-1954)," 320.

<sup>121</sup> Kerkvliet, *The Huk Rebellion*, 240.



led and organized to combat an insurgency. The appointment of Magsaysay as the Secretary of National Defense in September 1950 was the beginning of the end for the Huk movement. The Huks proved to be unable to deter the positive influence of Magsaysay on the government, constabulary, military, and most importantly the populace. By 1954 Magsaysay had improved the government and military to the point that the perception was that both had greatly improved. This was coupled with the fact that the tide had significantly turned on the Huk movement militarily. Therefore, by 1954, this prerequisite had become a significant disadvantage for the Huks.

*d. Geographic Conditions*

The Philippines is comprised of an archipelago of 7,100 islands with ninety percent of the land area concentrated on eleven islands. Luzon, Mindanao, and Palawan are three islands with the greatest concentration of populace. These islands as well as numerous smaller islands are all prone to earthquakes. The larger islands of the Philippines consist of largely mountainous terrain. This has created narrow coastal plains and interior valleys and plains. The Central Plain of Luzon is one of the largest contiguous lowland areas in the Philippines, stretching over 100 miles from Manila to the Lingayen Gulf, and averaging 40 miles in width.<sup>122</sup>

Sanctuary, external support, resupply, and communications were all limited by the geography of the area of operations of the Huk movement. The ability of the Huks to establish sanctuaries was limited in the Central Plains of Luzon, because the geography was generally wide open and lacked adequate forests or dense jungles in which the Huks could easily seek refuge. External support was limited by the fact that the Huk movement lacked access to ports. Internal resupply of the Huk movement from the Central Plains of Luzon to the mountains would be severely limited when counterinsurgency forces effectively blocked these routes. Finally, Robert R. Smith argues that the geography of the Philippines forced the Huk movement to set up a complicated and vulnerable clandestine communications system.<sup>123</sup> Dependence on this

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<sup>122</sup> Lachica, *The Huks*, 49-51 and Smith, 475.

<sup>123</sup> Smith, "The Philippines (1946-1954)," 490.

vulnerable system of couriers was to greatly affect the information advantage the Huks retained until October 1950.

The prerequisite for a successful insurgency, geographic conditions, was a significant disadvantage for the Huk movement throughout the insurgency. Initially the government was too disorganized and ineffective to take advantage of this, but by 1954, with the improvement in government counterinsurgency efforts, this disadvantage was to become a major factor in the defeat of the Huk movement.

*e. External Support*

There is no evidence that the Huk movement received any significant external support. It is believed that Communist China may have provided one or two military advisors for a short period, but no significant material was forwarded in support of the insurgency by the Chinese. China did smuggle in a significant amount of printed propaganda in support of the Huk. It is also reported that the Chinese Communist Party of the Philippines may have distributed as much as \$200,000 from China to the Huks.<sup>124</sup>

The prerequisite for a successful insurgency, external support, was a significant disadvantage for the Huk movement throughout the insurgency. This significant disadvantage did not greatly impact the Huk movement until the effectiveness of the Philippine government and military began to improve.

*f. Information Advantage*

The Huks were victims of a disinformation campaign that may have set the stage for the insurgency. The USAFFE guerilla organizations, which had taken little active action against the Japanese occupation, had fed negative intelligence estimates reference the Huks since 1943 to the U.S. Pacific Command. The landlords and political elites in Central Luzon were also enemies of the Huks. Most of the landlords and political elites did not actively resist the Japanese occupation as the Huks had. Worse most of these landowners and political elites had collaborated with the Japanese. With the liberation of the Philippines by U.S. forces these same landowners and political elites quickly switched their support and were not punished. The fact that these collaborators

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<sup>124</sup> Molnar, "Philippines (1946-1954)," 322.

were now essentially in control of rebuilding the Philippine government created friction between the Huks and the Philippine government.

The objectives and targets of Huk propaganda campaigns were to vary during the insurgency. According to Molnar, common Huk propaganda themes included: land reform; corruption and injustice of the federal government; and charges of U.S. imperialism and colonialism. All of these propaganda themes were very effective among the Philippine populace, except the anti-U.S. themes.<sup>125</sup> The capture in 1952 of the American Communist, William Pomeroy, the Huk propaganda chief, was a coup for counterinsurgency forces, and severely hampered all future Huk propaganda campaigns.

Effective propaganda targeted at the recruitment to the cause of the Huks was limited to the Pampango-speaking areas. Though the Philippines is ethnically homogenous there are at least eight major lingual groups and there are other variations in social customs, traits and attitudes. Lachica believes that this could explain why Huk efforts to spread the rebellion to other areas of the Philippines were repeatedly met with failure.<sup>126</sup>

The Huk movement had excellent information on the Philippine government and counterinsurgency efforts, but the historian Smith argues that the adequacy of the Huk collection system was most likely overestimated by counterinsurgent forces.<sup>127</sup> The Huk movement transmitted information primarily by courier systems. Kerkvliet, argues that during the insurgency the Huks never had enough couriers to make their communications system as effective as desired.<sup>128</sup> The vulnerability of this courier system was to be exposed in October 1950. The information advantage shifted to Magsaysay's counterinsurgent forces on 18 October 1950 with the capture of the entire Politburo operating inside Manila. A Huk informant had identified the communist apparatus to the counterinsurgency forces. The loss of the entire Politburo operating inside Manila deprived the Huk movement the critical ability to communicate

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<sup>125</sup> Molnar, "Philippines (1946-1954)," 323.

<sup>126</sup> Lachica, *The Huks*, 38.

<sup>127</sup> Smith, "The Philippines (1946-1954)," 490.

<sup>128</sup> Kerkvliet, *The Huk Rebellion*, 216.

with its urban supporters in Manila. Documents which described in detail how the Huk organization was managed and operated were captured. Worse, personnel records including complete rosters of active members, sympathizers, and other passive supporters were captured. Unable to communicate with their urban supporters the Huk movement quickly lost the initiative. The lack of information was to result in the Huk leadership becoming isolated in the mountains.

The prerequisite for a successful insurgency, information advantage, was a significant advantage for the Huk movement until the 18 October 1950 capture of the entire Politburo operating inside Manila. The capture of this cell, with a significant amount of personnel and organizational information, resulted in a significant loss of morale within the Huk movement. More importantly the Huk movement had lost their significant advantage in information in Central Luzon. With the identification of the vulnerability of their courier system of communications and the resultant loss of initiative by the Huk movement, this prerequisite was now a significant disadvantage for the Huks.

## **5. Conclusion**

The Huk insurgency was almost successful. A corrupt and ineffective Philippine government enabled the Huk movement to grow and gain support. The Huk movement's defeat in 1954 stemmed from several factors rather than any one cause. Two of these factors the Huks had little or no control over: (1) the improved morale, efficiency, and capability of the Philippine government and security forces after September 1950 due to the appointment of Magsaysay; and (2) American financial aid in support of Magsaysay's social and civic policies aimed at defeating the insurgency.

There were numerous factors that the Huk movement had control over: (1) greatly reducing the support of their mass base of support in Central Luzon by resorting to needless violence and confiscating required supplies as the government's counterinsurgency efforts became more effective; (2) failure to retain external support throughout the insurgency; (3) an over-dependence on a vulnerable courier system of communication resulting in the loss of the information advantage; and (4) failure to effectively expand the struggle outside of Central Luzon.

Prerequisites for a successful insurgency	Initial	Final
A Cause to Fight For	●	◐
Local Populace Support	●	○
Weakness in the Authority	●	○
Geographic Conditions	○	○
External Support	○	○
Information Advantage	●	○

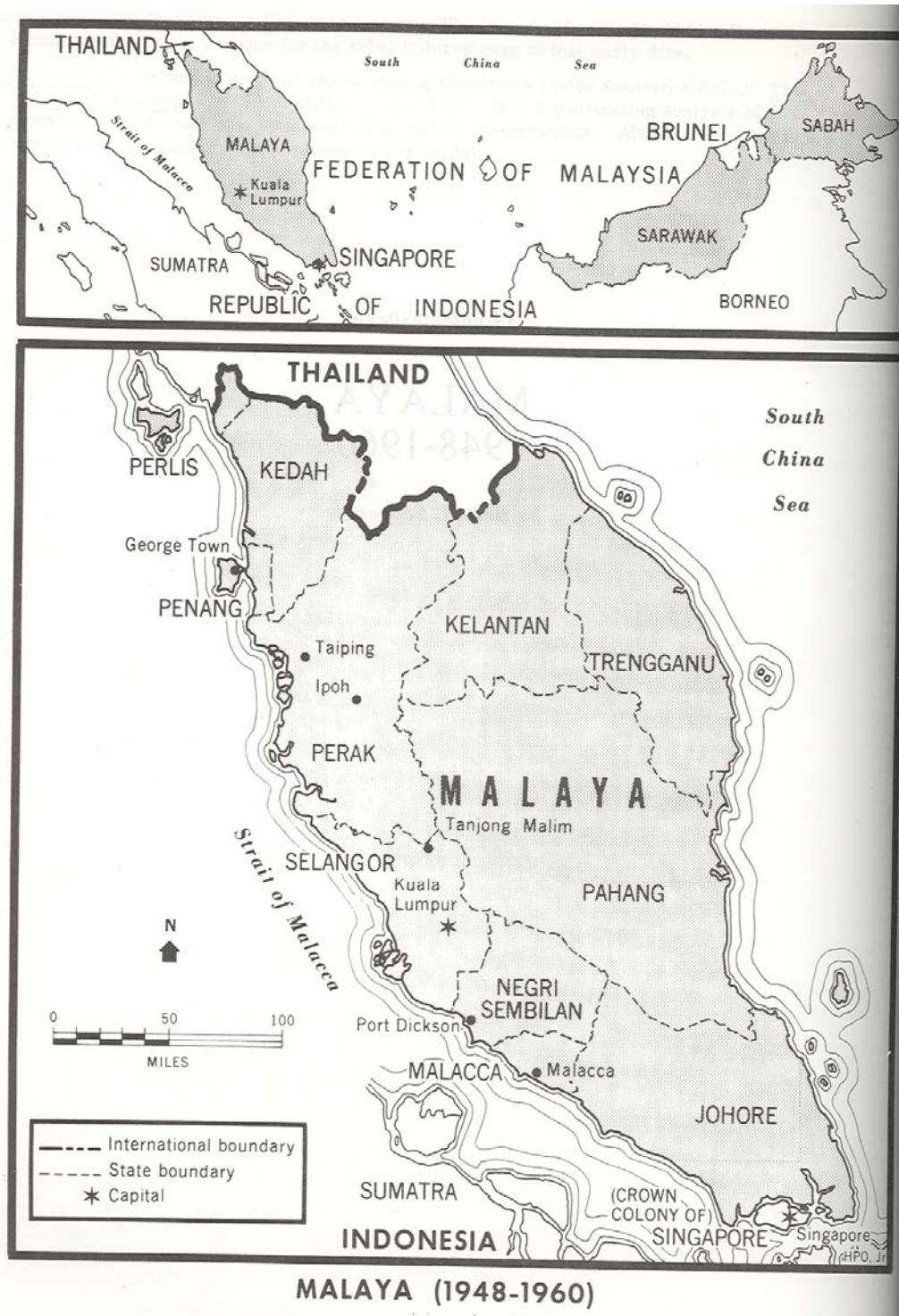
**Legend**

- Significant Advantage
- ◐ Limited Advantage
- ◑ Limited Disadvantage
- Significant Disadvantage

**Figure 9. Philippines (Huk Rebellion) Prerequisites for a Successful Insurgency Chart**

Using a Likert scale to examine the Huk Rebellion against the prerequisites for a successful insurgency it becomes obvious that the Huks initially had four significant advantages: a cause to fight for, local populace support, weakness in the authority, and information advantage. The Philippine government under the leadership of Magsaysay was able to set the conditions such that three prerequisites: local populace support, weakness in authority, and information advantage, were transformed to significant disadvantages by 1954. The Huk Rebellion also was unable to prevent the Philippine government from transforming the prerequisite, a cause to fight for, from a significant advantage to a limited disadvantage for the insurgency. The only reason that this prerequisite is not a significant disadvantage for the Huk movement is because the issues between landowners and peasants, though greatly reduced by policies under Magsaysay, were not completely solved. Two of the prerequisites – geographic conditions and external support – were both significant disadvantages for the Huk movement throughout the insurgency.

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**Figure 10. Malaya (1948-1960)**

(From *Challenge and Response in Internal Conflict, Volume I The Experience in Asia* by D. M. Condit, 1967 440.)

## D. MALAYAN EMERGENCY (1948-1960)

### 1. Background

Following the Japanese occupation of Malaya, 1942-1945, the British established the semiautonomous Federation of Malaya in 1948 in response to a growing nationalist movement. The Malayan Communist Party (MCP), sensing weakness and a lack of will in the British, opted to commence armed conflict against the British and took to the jungles. Britain declared a state of emergency on 18 June 1948 in order to quell the communist insurgency. The conflict was to last until 1960. Initially called the “Anti-Bandit Campaign,” the Malayan Emergency was a contest of wills with the MCP, with its predominantly ethnic Chinese communist membership on one side and the Malayan government, British, and Commonwealth forces on the other side.

<u>Insurgent Forces</u>			<u>Counterinsurgent Forces</u>	
The numerous name changes of the military arm of the MCP in chronological order	{	MCP	Malayan Communist Party	Government of Malaya British Commonwealth
		MPAJA	Malayan People’s Anti-Japanese Army	
		MPABA	Malayan People’s Anti-British Army	
		MPLA	Malayan People’s Liberation Army	
		MRLA	Malayan Races Liberation Army	

**Figure 11. Malayan Emergency Insurgent and Counterinsurgent Forces**

During the Japanese occupation of Malaya, the MCP formed guerrilla units called the Malayan People’s Anti-Japanese Army (MPAJA), which were trained and equipped by the British. The MPAJA was to have very little effect on the Japanese occupation forces, opting instead to focus most of their efforts on eliminating political rivals. The scholar Bert H. Cooper argues that though having little effect on the Japanese occupation, “the MCP took full advantage of the opportunities afforded by the war to emerge in Malayan Chinese eyes as the liberator of the country.”<sup>129</sup>

The rapid recovery of the Malayan economy after World War II, largely due to its abundant resources which were in high demand globally, created a situation where the MCP was losing all the prestige and influence it had gained immediately after the

<sup>129</sup> Bert H. Cooper, “Malaya (1948-1960),” in *Challenge and Response in Internal Conflict, Volume I The Experience in Asia* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Research in Social Systems, The American University, 1967), 444.



occupation. Cooper posits that the communists realized that Malaya's prosperous peacetime society was destroying the MCP's cohesion and revolutionary élan.<sup>130</sup>

With the country of Malaya recovering from the ravages of Japanese occupation, the British formed the Federation of Malaya in February 1948. The Federation of Malaya was dominated by the Malay ethnic portion of the populace. The Chinese minority felt that they were discriminated against in the areas of land ownership, citizenship, and political representation. To the MCP, the establishment of the Malay-dominated Federation was another indication of the wider British strategy of containing communism.

The General Secretary of the MCP, Chen Peng, in 1948, estimated that the British were in a weak position. He based this assumption on the fact that the British economy was weak, the withdrawal of Britain from India, and the fact that the British public was war weary. The scholar Larry E. Cable argues that what Peng failed to understand was that Malaya's natural resources, especially rubber and tin, were critical sources of revenue for the British.<sup>131</sup> Bert H. Cooper confirms the importance of Malaya's resources when he wrote, "Malaya's rich rubber plantations and tin mines produced almost half the world output of rubber and around one-third of the world's tin, paying for the country's imports of food and manufactured goods."<sup>132</sup>

With a rapidly expanding Malayan economy eroding the MCP's cohesion and revolutionary élan, the establishment of the Malay-dominated Federation as part of the British wider strategy of containing communism, and believing that the British were in a weak position, Chen Peng decided that armed conflict was the only way to bring the communist revolution to Malaya.

## **2. Insurgency Strategy**

In December 1945, the MPAJA avoided total disarmament by the British by pretending to demobilize. The MPAJA in preparation for anticipated future operations

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<sup>130</sup> Cooper, "Malaya (1948-1960)," 445.

<sup>131</sup> Larry E. Cable, *Conflict of Myths: The Development of American Counterinsurgency Doctrine and the Vietnam War* (New York: New York University Press, 1986), 72.

<sup>132</sup> Cooper, "Malaya (1948-1960)," 442.

had maintained personnel rosters and hidden supplies. The MPAJA also maintained a functioning shadow organization that could be activated when the conditions were right.

The MCP's strategy was to use protracted insurgent warfare to defeat the will of the British to maintain control of Malaya. The counterinsurgency expert Julian Paget argues that the MCP's campaign was based on three phases: (1) organize an insurgent movement to paralyze Malaya's economy and tie down and demoralize the Malayan security forces; (2) establish communist controlled "liberated areas" from which communist forces could operate during the final phase of the campaign; and (3) create a "liberation army" as the populace rallied to their cause and defeat the British.<sup>133</sup> The MCP had very limited success in the first phase and completely failed to reach the subsequent phases of the campaign.

At the tactical level, the communists' operations were based on terror: assassination, kidnapping, blackmail, sniping, intimidation, threats, arson, and sabotage. The communists utilized primarily hit-and-run attacks, focusing on softer targets such as the rubber plantations, mines, or isolated police stations.

In the spring of 1948 the newly established Malayan People's Anti-British Army (MPABA) executed a campaign of terror against mines and rubber plantations. Following the assassination of three British rubber planters at Sungai Siput, Perak on June 16, 1948; British authorities proclaimed a state of emergency on June 17, 1948 in order to deal with the communist insurgency. This forced the MCP to return to the jungle and reorganize for insurgent warfare. The MPABA changed its name first to the Malayan People's Liberation Army (MPLA), and then later the Malayan Races Liberation Army (MRLA). The MRLA and the *Min Chung Yuen Thong* (*Min Yuen*), the civilian support element, was the MCP's guerrilla army. The MRLA never exceeded 6,000 in strength, and the *Min Yuen* estimated strength ranged from 10,000 to 100,000 active participants throughout the conflict.<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> Julian Paget, "Emergency in Malaya," in *Guerrilla Strategies: An Historical Anthology from the Long March to Afghanistan*, (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1982), 271.

<sup>134</sup> Andrew R. Molnar & et. al., "Malaya (1948-60)," in *Undergrounds in Insurgent, Revolutionary, and Resistance Warfare* (Washington, D.C.: The American University, 1963), 246.

According to scholar James E. Dougherty, with populace support declining the MCP issued a directive dated October 1, 1951 which

ordered all members to desist from the following practices: seizing identity and ration cards, burning new villages, attacking post offices, reservoirs, and other public facilities, derailing civilian trains, burning religious buildings and Red Cross vehicles, and committing sabotage against the major industries, thereby causing workers to lose their jobs.<sup>135</sup>

The MCP had concluded that their use of indiscriminate terror was no longer effective. The MCP shifted tactics to a more discriminate use of terror aimed primarily at British military forces and facilities.

Unable to create a united front including the Malays and Chinese, the MCP in 1955 offered to make a negotiated peace with the British. The British insisted on the unconditional surrender of all guerrillas and only offered to pardon individual guerrillas. There would be no amnesty offered to the MCP as a whole. Finding the terms unacceptable Chen Peng sought sanctuary along the Malaya-Thailand border.

### **3. The Counterinsurgency Strategy**

The British counterinsurgency strategy developed in three phases. The first was the conventional phase, 1949 to June 1950. The second phase was the Briggs Plan, June 1950 to 1960. The third phase was the transition to independence.

The British discovered in 1949 that the combination of jungle and mountainous terrain in Malaya made quick deployment of large bodies of troops to remote locations impossible. The initial attempt to use a strategy of conventional warfare against the MCP had little effect on the insurgent's strategy.

In April 1950, Lieutenant General Sir Harold Briggs was appointed Director of Operations for Malaya, with operational control over all civil and military forces in Malaya. Scholar Robert B. Asprey argues that Briggs "recognized that the key to the situation lay in winning support of the civil population or at least in depriving the

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<sup>135</sup> James E. Dougherty, "The Guerrilla War in Malaya," in *Modern Guerrilla Warfare: Fighting Communist Guerrilla Movements, 1941-1961* (New York: The Free Press, 1962), 304-305.

guerrillas of that support.”<sup>136</sup> On June 1, 1950, he implemented what was to become the “Briggs Plan.” The four principles of the Briggs Plan were: (1) separation of the insurgents from the populace; (2) unity of effort; (3) quality intelligence; and (4) small unit operations.

In order to separate the insurgent from its populace support, Briggs ordered the relocation and resettlement of almost 500,000 Chinese squatters from along the fringes of the jungle to one of the 400 “New Villages.” Security of the “New Villages” was initially provided by the government, and then transitioned to a Home Guard made up of residents of the “New Village.” The Home Guard encouraged active participation of the populace in the counterinsurgency efforts.

In February 1952, General Sir Gerald Templer was appointed High Commissioner and Director of Operations in Malaya thus ensuring unity of effort between the civic and military commands. By this point the Briggs Plan had established enough security with Malaya that Templer could focus on dismantling the MCP as an organization. At this point British forces now took the fight to the communists strongholds in the jungles with some success. Templer also instituted the establishment of White Areas. Once it was determined within a Malayan district that communist forces had been destroyed and the MCP effectively undermined politically, the district was designated a White Area and all Emergency restrictions were lifted. If the MCP were to become effective in a White Area all Emergency restrictions would be immediately put back into effect. In a testament to the success of this program, not one of the White Areas returned to Emergency restrictions. In 1960, with Chen Peng hiding along the Malaya-Thailand border and the last two districts in northern Malaya declared White Areas, thus ended the Malayan Emergency.

#### **4. Prerequisites of Successful Insurgencies**

##### ***a. A Cause to Fight For***

The MCP attempted to rally the local populace to two causes: (1) independence from colonial rule; and (2) Chinese minority grievances. The first cause,

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<sup>136</sup> Robert B. Asprey, *War in the Shadows: The Guerrilla in History* (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1994), 788.

independence from colonial rule, was an attempt to win over the majority of the populace which was Malay. The MCP was unable to effectively gain the support of the populace for this nationalist anti-British cause, since the British were working with the Malayan government to gain their independence. The second cause, Chinese minority grievances, appealed to the Chinese segment of the populace, but had no hope of rallying the Malays to join the MCP's fight. This cause was effectively addressed by the Malayan government and the British, when the basic grievances of the Chinese minority, land ownership and representation within government, were dealt with to the general satisfaction of the Chinese populace.

The prerequisite for a successful insurgency, a cause to fight for, was a significant disadvantage for the MCP from the very beginning of the Malayan Emergency. The communists were depending on exploiting a nationalist anti-British sentiment among the Malays, which was not there. And the British and Malayan government prevented the MCP from exploiting the basic grievances of the Chinese minority by dealing with the issues in a systematic approach that satisfied the Chinese minority.

***b. Local Populace Support***

The population was approximately 5.3 million at the start of the Emergency in 1948. The ethnic breakdown of Malaya was 49 percent Malay, 38 percent Chinese, 11 percent Indian and Ceylonese, and slightly more than 1 percent aboriginal tribesmen. There were also 12,000 European expatriates working mostly as rubber plantation owners or tin mine managers. Counterinsurgency expert John A. Nagl has identified that the Malayan army and police force was led by British officers and populated almost entirely by Malay persons.<sup>137</sup> The scholar Cooper also identified the interesting dynamic that the Chinese populace concentration in the urban areas of Malaya was so great that they outnumbered the dominant Malay populace in urban areas.<sup>138</sup>

The MCP failed to win the support of the populace for several reasons. First, the MCP was seen as primarily a Chinese movement. Second, the communists

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<sup>137</sup> John A. Nagl, *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife: Counterinsurgency Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam* (2nd ed., Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2005), 60.

<sup>138</sup> Cooper, "Malaya (1948-1960)," 442.

failed to understand that the Malays were not discontent with British rule. Third, the MCP alienated the populace with their policy of trying to bring the Malayan economy to a halt. This policy only served to increase unemployment because of the assassinations or destroyed critical infrastructure. Fourth, the political solution offered by the MCP was a communist state, which had no appeal to the general populace.

Because the MCP was seen as a communist Chinese movement, it alienated itself from the other ethnic groups, which greatly impacted recruitment. Though the MCP was predominantly a Chinese movement, it never received the support of the majority of the Malayan Chinese. Ethnic divisions within Malaya prevented the MCP from gaining local populace support. Members of the MCP were predominantly Chinese, a significant minority in Malaya. Efforts by the MCP to reach out to other parties for support were completely ineffective.

Because of the global demand for its resources, especially tin and rubber, Malaya was able to recover from World War II more rapidly than most countries. Bert H. Cooper argues that by 1948 the postwar economic difficulties, such as food shortages, inflation, and the black market, were settled; and, the populace of Malaya actually enjoyed one of the highest living standards in Asia. This economic improvement severely hampered MCP recruitment efforts.<sup>139</sup> The initial policy of the MCP to target the economy of Malaya was to have a detrimental effect on the populace. Because of lost jobs or wages due to MCP terrorist actions populace support was lost.

The resettlement of approximately 500,000 Chinese squatters effectively separated the MCP from current and future supporters. The Chinese squatters who lived on the edges of the jungle supplied food. Relocation of the squatters greatly impacted the communists' ability to resupply and to gain critical information required to retain the initiative. Because of this the communists had to attempt to grow their own food, which required manpower, and was susceptible to discovery and destruction by British forces.

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<sup>139</sup> Cooper, "Malaya (1948-1960)," 442, 445.

Thus, the communists were effectively separated from the populace and in the words of the scholar Anthony Crockett, their “logistic problem was infinitesimal compared to that of British troops.”<sup>140</sup>

The MCP initially had a limited advantage in the prerequisite for a successful insurgency, local populace support, primarily due to their ability to return to the organization that they had developed during the Japanese occupation and the accessibility of the Chinese squatter populace. By 1955, primarily due to the Briggs Plan, this prerequisite had become a significant disadvantage for the MCP.

**c. *Weakness in the Authority***

The MCP initially had a limited advantage in the prerequisite for a successful insurgency, weakness in the authority, due to the disorganized government of the Federation, and the British attempt to fight the insurgents conventionally. Because of the successful implementation of the Briggs Plan and Templar’s White Areas, this prerequisite was a significant disadvantage for the MCP by 1955.

**d. *Geographic Conditions***

Malaya is a peninsula of approximately 50,500 square miles, which is slightly larger than the state of New Mexico. Sharing its only land border to the north with Thailand, Malaya was essentially an island state. In 1948, 80 percent of the territory of Malaya was uncultivated jungle, forest, and swamp.<sup>141</sup> Running north to south the length of the interior of the peninsula are mountain ranges reaching heights up to 7,000 feet.

The relative smallness of Malaya enabled the British to isolate the country. The British navy was able to isolate Malaya on three sides by controlling the Malayan coast, and the Government of Thailand closed the fourth side. Though the communist forces could operate near the border of Thailand, the government of Thailand was not receptive to communist forces entering their territory.

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<sup>140</sup> Anthony Crockett, “Action in Malaya,” in *Modern Guerrilla Warfare: Fighting Communist Guerrilla Movements, 1941-1961* (New York: The Free Press, 1962), 312.

<sup>141</sup> Nagl, *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife*, 60.

The prerequisite for a successful insurgency, geographic conditions, was a significant disadvantage for the MCP throughout the insurgency. The isolation caused by geographic conditions and the efforts of the British forces ensured that external support would be extremely difficult.

*e. External Support*

The Malayan communists received little external support. It is believed that Chinese officers arrived in early 1950, but did not stay long. With Thailand forming the only land border and not supporting the MCP's cause, the Malayan communist forces had no sanctuary. With no secure base outside Malaya the MCP was unable to safely reorganize, resupply, or train. International political support for the MCP's insurgency, also did not exist. The prerequisite for a successful insurgency, external support, was a significant disadvantage for the MCP throughout the insurgency.

*f. Information Advantage*

Due to a lack of radios, the communist forces primarily depended upon a system of couriers for transmitting information. This courier system proved to be cumbersome, slow, vulnerable, and generally unsuccessful. Because of counterinsurgent efforts, by 1951, a message could take up to a year to deliver.

According to Bert H. Cooper, in order to compensate for the lack of effective communications, the MCP adopted a quota system for assigning military operations. Once a year, the MCP Politburo would establish quotas for each type of military operation to be executed throughout Malaya over the next year. Based on the overall quotas for Malaya, quotas were then assigned to each state and district. Though the quota system did enable the MCP to continue insurgent operations for over a decade, it proved to be inefficient. Over time, communist commanders began to focus on overfilling the easier military operations, in order to compensate for failing to execute the more dangerous military operations. Also, under this system each communist commander was able to pick and schedule the operation of his choosing. Though this decentralized military operation quota system helped overcome the MCP's inefficient communications,



it also ensured that the MCP was unable to synchronize, mass, or sustain its operations to create more effective long-term damage on the counterinsurgency forces.<sup>142</sup>

The MCP initially focused all of their psychological operations on the Chinese minority. Realizing that they needed a united front consisting of all the ethnic groups in order to have a chance at success, the MCP attempted to expand their psychological operations to target the Malays and Indians. Overall the MCP's psychological operations added little value to reinforcing or expanding the insurgency.

The impact of the resettlement program, the improved ability of the Police Special Branch to infiltrate Chinese squatter communities, and effective British psychological operations aimed at encouraging insurgents to surrender, was disastrous for the MCP. The resettlement of approximately 500,000 Chinese squatters from along the jungle fringes effectively took the initiative away from the MCP. By separating the populace from the MCP the British were able to severely hamper the communists' ability to gather intelligence and transmit information.

According to the scholar Robert W. Komer, the Police Special Branch's ability to penetrate the Chinese squatter communities and gather intelligence was critical to counterinsurgent operations. The Police Special Branch's local knowledge and continuity enabled the government to build an intelligence file on almost every insurgent. Information programs by the Malayan and British governments were utilized effectively to inform the Malayan people on policies and programs.<sup>143</sup>

The British executed a psychological operations campaign to urge defection of individual guerrillas. The British program utilizing the "voice aircraft" was credited with much of the success of the defection program. In 1953, more than 350 defectors were reported.<sup>144</sup>

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<sup>142</sup> Cooper, "Malaya (1948-1960)," 452.

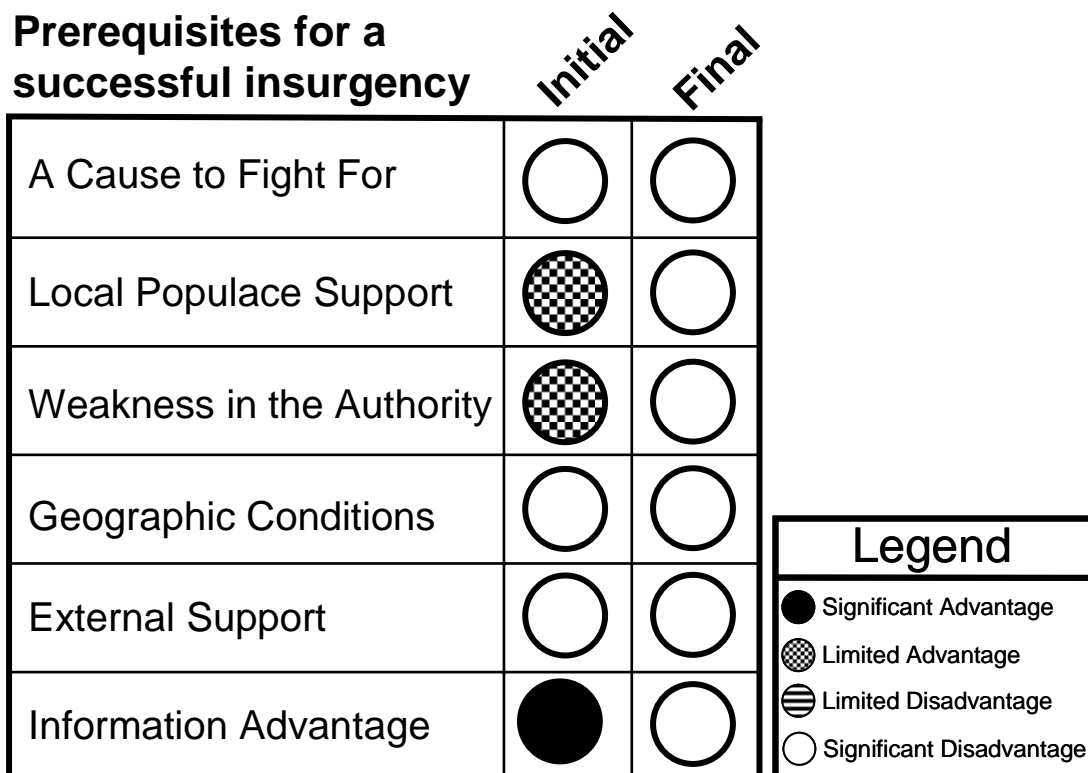
<sup>143</sup> Robert W. Komer, *The Malayan Emergency in Retrospect: Organization of a Successful Counterinsurgency Effort R-957-ARPA* (Santa Monica, California: Rand Corporation, 1972), 41-45.

<sup>144</sup> Dougherty, "The Guerrilla War in Malaya," 306.

The prerequisite for a successful insurgency, information advantage, was a significant advantage for the MCP initially. The MCP had well established communication networks that they had developed during the Japanese occupation. But, with the implementation of the Briggs Plan and the resettlement of the Chinese squatters, the communists quickly lost the information advantage and the ability to retain the initiative. By 1955, this prerequisite was a significant disadvantage for the MCP.

## 5. Conclusion

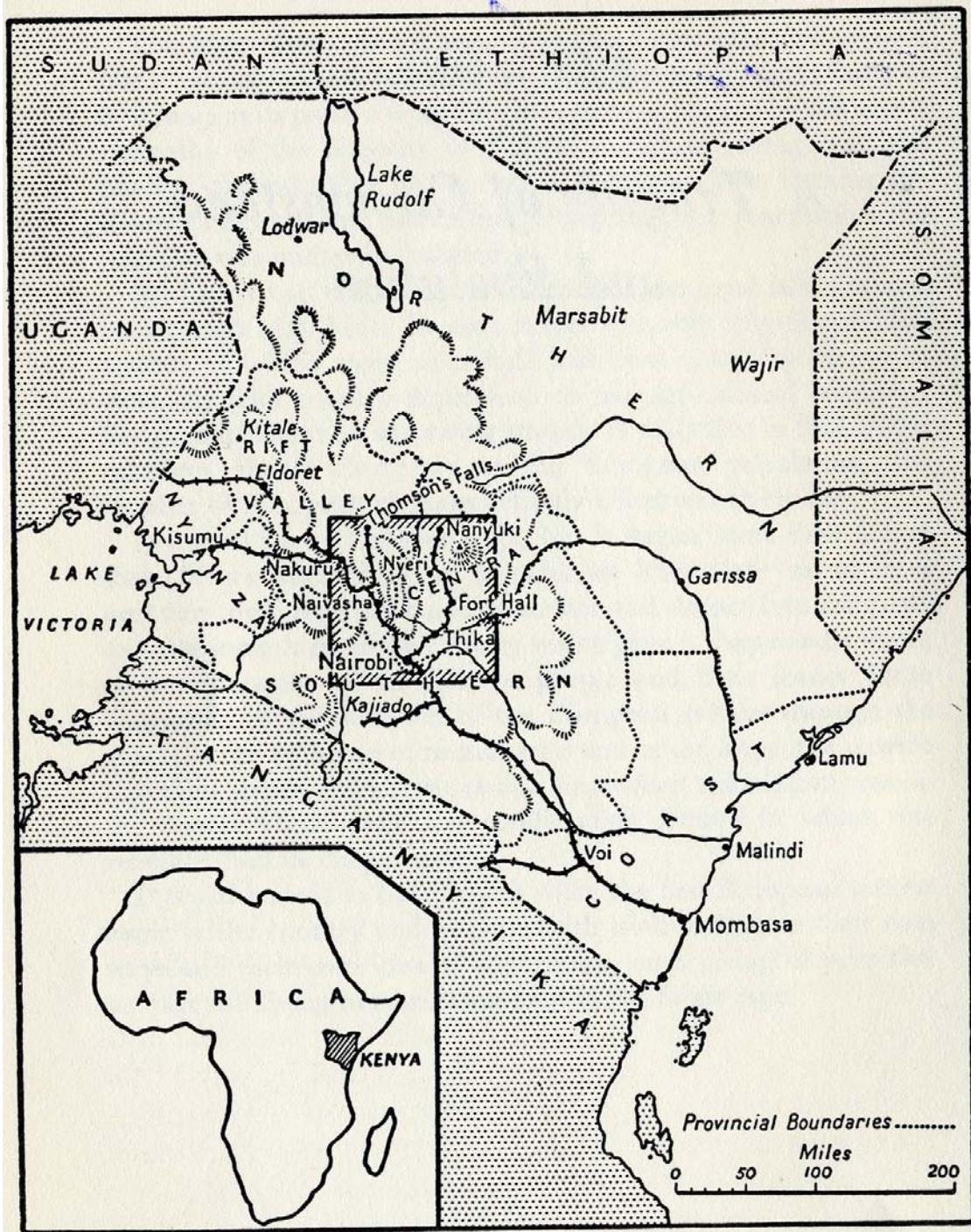
The MCP's defeat by 1960 was due to several factors: (1) the MCP never developed a viable cause that would gain not only the popular support of the Chinese minority, but the other ethnic groups; (2) failure to retain external support throughout the insurgency; (3) an over-dependence on a vulnerable courier system of communication resulting in the loss of the information advantage and the initiative; and (4) failure to effectively counter both the Briggs Plan and Templar's White Areas.



**Figure 12. Malayan Emergency (1948-1960) Prerequisites for a Successful Insurgency Chart**

Using a Likert scale to examine the Malayan Emergency against the prerequisites for a successful insurgency it becomes obvious that the communists initially had only one significant advantage, an information advantage. The communists also had a limited advantage in two prerequisites: local populace support and weakness in the authority. It is important to note that the communists also had three significant disadvantages at the start of this insurgency: a cause to fight for, geographic conditions, and external support. Primarily due to the Briggs Plan and Templar's White Areas, all prerequisites for a successful insurgency were determined to be significant disadvantages by 1955.

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**Figure 13. Kenya, Showing the Mau Mau Affected Area (1952-1960)**  
 (From *State of Emergency: The Full Story of Mau Mau* by Fred Majdalany, 1963, 2.)

## **E. KENYA EMERGENCY (1952-1960)**

### **1. Background**

Referred to as the Kenya Emergency by the British this conflict is also referred to as the Mau Mau Rebellion or Mau Mau Revolt. The Kenya Emergency was an insurgency initiated by Jomo Kenyatta, a Kikuyu tribesman, against the British colonial power from 1952 to 1960. The core of support for the insurgency was formed from the Kikuyu tribe, which according to the historian Michael Carver, “was the largest and the most intelligent and industrious tribe and they occupied the key central area running north from Nairobi for about a hundred miles on the eastern side of the Aberdare Mountains.”<sup>145</sup> The figure below lists the major political and military insurgent and counterinsurgent forces involved in the Kenya Emergency.

<b><u>Insurgent Forces</u></b>		<b><u>Counterinsurgent Forces</u></b>
KCA	Kikuyu Central Association	Colonial Government of Kenya
KAU	Kenya African Union	British
	Mau Mau	Home Guard
		Psuedo-gangs

**Figure 14. Kenya Emergency Insurgent and Counterinsurgent Forces**

Several issues led to the emergence of rebellion in Kenya among the indigenous populace toward the British colonial government. The primary issues were economic, social, education, religious beliefs and practices, friction between European settlers and the indigenous populace, and land. The issue of land was to have the greatest influence on the rebellion. At the heart of the land issue was the inequities created between the European settlers and the indigenous populace by the colonial government’s concepts of land ownership and farming practices.

Before World War I there was virtually no political activity in Kenya. The Kenyan political conscience manifested itself in Nairobi shortly after the end of World War I in the form of two opposing groups. The first African group was opposed to the colonial system and organized to agitate about wages. The second African group was prepared to work within the colonial system in order to protect African rights in the

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<sup>145</sup> Michael Carver, *War Since 1945* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1980), 29.

country areas. The British naturally supported this more responsible group, and the first group collapsed and a few years later was replaced by the Kikuyu Central Association (KCA) in 1924. According to the counterinsurgency expert Frank Kitson, the KCA combined the ideas of opposition of the colonial system and the ancient culture of the Kikuyu tribe.<sup>146</sup> The KCA was banned and forced underground by the colonial government in 1940, and in 1945 a new nationalist organization, the Kenya African Union (KAU), formed from the remains of the KCA. Michael Carver argues that the KAU was a legal political organization that was completely infiltrated by ex-members of the banned KCA organization.<sup>147</sup>

Jomo Kenyatta, who returned from England in 1946, was elected president of the KAU in 1947. In February 1951, extremists seized control from the moderates of the KAU by rigging the election. The KAU then focused on the critical logistics of an insurgency: obtaining arms and recruiting supporters for their cause. By 1952, almost the entire Kikuyu tribe supported outright opposition of the British colonial government in order to expel Europeans and Asians from Kenya. Jomo Kenyatta was arrested by the colonial government on charges of organizing the Mau Mau in October 1952. Sentenced on 8 April 1953 he remained in prison until 1959. Whether Jomo Kenyatta was responsible for organizing the Mau Mau is still disputed, but there is no doubt that his arrest and imprisonment added to the violence of the conflict.

On 6 October 1952, Sir Evelyn Baring assumed the post of Governor. He quickly assessed that the British faced a serious threat from the Mau Mau. This assessment was confirmed by the assassination of the respected senior Kikuyu Chief Warukiu on 9 October 1952. Chief Warukiu had recently criticized the Mau Mau's violence against the colonial government. On 20 October 1952 Governor Baring declared a state of emergency in Kenya, and the British government sent more troops to Kenya to help fight the Mau Mau.

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<sup>146</sup> Frank Kitson, *Bunch of Five* (London: Faber and Faber, 1977), 5-6.

<sup>147</sup> Carver, *War Since 1945*, 28.

## 2. Insurgency Strategy

In 1948 British and local authorities began to hear reports reference the activities of a secret Kikuyu organization called the Mau Mau. The scholar D. M. Condit argues that though the British believed that the leaders of the KAU and the Mau Mau were one and the same, in August 1950, the government declared that only the Mau Mau organization, not the KAU, was illegal.<sup>148</sup> The Mau Mau organization was not a communist movement. In the words of Robert B. Asprey, this movement “fed on a weird admixture of religious-tribal cultism while performing violent deeds particularly abhorrent to the Western world.”<sup>149</sup> The movement operated primarily through two organizations: the KAU and the Mau Mau. According to Michael Carver, the Mau Mau “was the strong-arm paramilitary organization, combining the functions both of warrior and witch-doctor.”<sup>150</sup>

The Mau Mau insurgents never publicly defined their aims. It is believed that their important aims were to recover Kikuyu land stolen by the Europeans, obtain self-government, destroy Christianity and restore ancient customs, and drive out or subjugate all foreigners from Kenya. There is also very little certainty about what the Mau Mau leaders’ planned insurgency strategy really was. It is generally accepted that the strategic intent of the Mau Mau leaders was to utilize either outright violence or civil disobedience as the means for achieving African supremacy.

The traditional Kikuyu practice of oathing, the taking of verbal oaths of loyalty to a cause or religion, was exploited by the Mau Mau organization. According to Frank Kitson, the Mau Mau were able to use oathing to unite followers and gain popular

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<sup>148</sup> D. M. Condit, “Kenya (1952-1960),” in *Challenge and Response in Internal Conflict, Volume III The Experience in Africa and Latin America* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Research in Social Systems, The American University, 1968), 278.

<sup>149</sup> Asprey, *War in the Shadows*, 884.

<sup>150</sup> Carver, *War Since 1945*, 28.



support.<sup>151</sup> The Mau Mau, in the words of Kitson, “having summoned a supernatural power the people taking the oath would swear to unite together in their efforts to promote their cause.”<sup>152</sup>

### **3. The Counterinsurgency Strategy**

At the start of the Kenya Emergency, the British colonial government was unprepared to fight an insurgency. The British, actively engaged with the Malayan Emergency, considered Kenya a sideshow, limited in scope and duration. Unlike the insurgency in Malaya, which impacted the entire peninsula, the Kenya insurgency was confined to a small area of approximately two thousand square miles. While the state of emergency lasted for just under eight years, the historian Charles Allen argues that the counterinsurgency fighting was essentially three years followed by a fourth year of mopping up.<sup>153</sup>

The scholar Anthony Clayton argues that it is evident that from the start of the emergency both the government and the military agreed upon one thing, that the “Mau Mau had to be suppressed; political negotiations were totally inconceivable.”<sup>154</sup> According to D. M. Condit, the British counterinsurgency strategy in Kenya sought to achieve four objectives: (1) regain and control Mau Mau controlled areas; (2) pacify and control the local populace, especially the Kikuyu, Meru, and Embu; (3) rehabilitate known and suspected Mau Mau, including hardcore members; and (4) institute political and economical reforms setting the conditions for settlement of outstanding issues.<sup>155</sup>

The government’s initial reaction to the Mau Mau insurgency was largely political and police enforcement in nature. The Mau Mau organization was declared illegal in August 1950 and several persons were arrested and tried for being members. Believing that Kenyatta was the leader of the Mau Mau the government tried and

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<sup>151</sup> Kitson, *Bunch of Five*, 7-9.

<sup>152</sup> Kitson, *Bunch of Five*, 8.

<sup>153</sup> Charles Allen, *The Savage Wars of Peace: Soldiers’ Voices 1945-1989* (Great Britain: Michael Joseph, Ltd., 1990), 125.

<sup>154</sup> Anthony Clayton, *Counter-insurgency in Kenya 1952-60: A Study of Military Operations against the Mau-Mau* (Nairobi: Kenya Litho Ltd, 1976), 1.

<sup>155</sup> Condit, “Kenya (1952-1960),” 288.

convicted him in early 1953. Kenyatta spent the entire emergency imprisoned. Many argue that whatever Kenyatta's motives or role in the insurgency had been prior to October 1952, his imprisonment rendered him unable to control events after that date. The escalation in violence by the Mau Mau after this date may have been due to Kenyatta's imprisonment. The Mau Mau continued to gain influence and grow in numbers and now there were no respected leaders that could moderate the Mau Mau organization's leanings toward violence. This and numerous other governmental shortfalls and missteps resulted in the British not having the initiative at the outset of the Kenya Emergency on 20 October 1952.

In June 1953 General Sir George Erskine arrived and took up the post of commander of the newly organized East Africa Command. This new command reported directly to England. Erskine was to hold this position until May 1955. Erskine during this time was to plan and execute several operations that were to lead to the defeat of the Mau Mau.

Operation Anvil commenced on 24 April 1954 and was executed to bring the city of Nairobi back under government control. Mau Mau informants were used extensively through out this operation and within two weeks, some 28,000 persons, almost half of Nairobi's populace, had been screened. The information gathered during this operation enabled the British to finally understand the organizational structure of the Mau Mau in both the forests and Nairobi. Also, the passive wing of the Mau Mau was effectively disrupted, and thanks to gathered information, counterinsurgency forces could now prevent the reorganization of the passive wing. D. M. Condit argues that at this point the British had essentially cut off the majority of support to the Mau Mau organization operating in the reserves.<sup>156</sup>

In mid-1953, in an attempt to regain control of the reserves from the Mau Mau, General Sir George Erskine designated the Kikuyu reserves "special areas." This designation enabled security forces to shoot anyone that failed to halt when challenged. The forests were then declared "prohibited areas;" any person found within these areas without proper clearance could be shot on sight. In late 1953 Operation Blitz used

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<sup>156</sup> Condit, "Kenya (1952-1960)," 293-294.

counterinsurgency forces to sweep the Aberdare forest. Such large military operations proved to be ineffective at finding, trapping and killing the Mau Mau in the forests. In June 1954, the British government began a policy of resettlement of the Kikuyu populace into villages. This policy of “villagization” enabled the government to simultaneously protect government supporters and to more effectively limit support to the Mau Mau. In January 1954 Operation Hammer, a large sweep operation of the forests of the Aberdare Mountains, netted few insurgents. Moving the operation to the Mount Kenya area, counterinsurgency forces were able to capture numerous Mau Mau and killed twenty-four of fifty-one of the Mau Mau leaders. Operation Hungerstrike, a food denial operation was conducted in mid-1955. This operation proved to be much more effective at disrupting the Mau Mau organization than the large military sweeps.

Ex-Mau Mau and allied Africans were used by the colonial government to create pseudo-gangs. Pseudo-gangs were primarily composed of de-oathed and turned Kikuyu tribesmen. Several of the pseudo-gangs were actually led by white British officers. These units enabled the British to effectively infiltrate the Mau Mau organization. By the end of 1955, twenty-four out of the fifty-one principal terrorist leaders of the Mau Mau were killed, most by pseudo-gang operations.<sup>157</sup> The use of pseudo-gangs proved to be a highly successful strategy for the British.

In an effort to use a carrot-and-stick approach, the government in 1955 declared an amnesty, which absolved Home Guard members from prosecution and gave members of the Mau Mau an opportunity to surrender. On 20 May 1955 the last peace talks with the Mau Mau were deemed unsuccessful. Counterinsurgency forces executed offensive operations using pseudo-gangs against a demoralized Mau Mau organization that was extremely low on supplies, especially weapons and ammunition. It is estimated that only 500 rebels remained by September 1956. The last Mau Mau leader, Dedan Kimathi, was wounded and captured by Kikuyu Tribal Police on 21 October 1956 in Nyeri, and was subsequently hanged in early 1957. Though the capture of Dedan Kimathi marked the

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<sup>157</sup> Carver, *War Since 1945*, 42.

effective end of the Mau Mau Rebellion, the state of emergency in Kenya remained in effect until January 1960, and several die-hard Mau Mau members remained in the forests until 1963.

#### **4. Prerequisites of Successful Insurgencies**

##### ***a. A Cause to Fight For***

The prerequisite for a successful insurgency, a cause to fight for, was initially a significant advantage for the Mau Mau. The Mau Mau successfully combined oath-taking and the land issue to develop an issue that would drive the insurgency. D. M. Condit argues that this cause was credible to the Kikuyu because even within the Kikuyu reserve, “the Kikuyu felt insecure, for unlike the Europeans they held no legal titles, and they feared further encroachment.”<sup>158</sup> Furthermore, many of the Kikuyu believed that the return of their land would automatically solve their economic problems. Wunyabari O. Maloba, an expert on the Mau Mau, argues that the colonial government’s program of rehabilitation of captured Mau Mau was essential to undermining the Mau Mau.<sup>159</sup> This program, coupled with political, economic and social promises made by the colonial government, effectively reduced this prerequisite to a significant disadvantage for the Mau Mau by 1955.

##### ***b. Local Populace Support***

The populace of Kenya at the time of the Kenya Emergency was approximately eight and one quarter million people,<sup>160</sup> and was divided among forty to eighty tribes depending on the criteria used.<sup>161</sup> According to D. M. Condit, of these tribes the Kikuyu was the largest tribe and considered to be the most advanced in Kenya.<sup>162</sup> The combination of the imprisonment of Kenyatta in April 1953 and counterinsurgency operations by the government, created a feeling of desperation in the Central Province, the White Highlands, Nairobi, and other areas with high concentrations of Kikuyu

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<sup>158</sup> Condit, “Kenya (1952-1960),” 275.

<sup>159</sup> Wunyabari O. Maloba, *Mau Mau and Kenya: Analysis of a Peasant Revolt* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993), 137-140.

<sup>160</sup> Kitson, *Bunch of Five*, 3.

<sup>161</sup> Condit, “Kenya (1952-1960),” 273.

<sup>162</sup> Condit, “Kenya (1952-1960),” 273.

tribesmen. Wunyabari O. Maloba posits that the Mau Mau effectively exploited the resultant fear, panic, and anger among the Kikuyu tribe in order to set the conditions for a violent and open revolt against the colonial government.<sup>163</sup> These conditions, combined with the efforts of the Mau Mau organization's passive wing, and the exploitation of oathing, resulted in the Mau Mau having a significant advantage in the prerequisite for a successful insurgency, local populace support.

According to D. M. Condit, the passive wing of the Mau Mau organization, estimated to have involved 30,000 active members, is credited with much of the organization's initial strategic success. The passive wing's objective was to gain support, especially Kikuyu, for the Mau Mau movement. The passive wing supplemented the KAU's political activities with propaganda, oathing ceremonies, fund collection, and acquiring weapons.<sup>164</sup>

Initially oathing was used by the KAU to attract political supporters, but later oaths were used to coerce members to commit violence in the name of the cause. Frank Kitson argues that as the tribal elders worked to influence the members of their tribe to reject the violence encouraged by the KAU and Mau Mau organizations, the oath process was exploited by the KAU and Mau Mau to push members of the tribe outside of the influence of the tribal elders.<sup>165</sup> It is estimated that in October 1952, approximately twenty percent of the Kikuyu tribe were believed to have been oathed by the Mau Mau, and by 1953 it was believed that it had increased to seventy or eighty percent.<sup>166</sup>

The Massacre at Lari by the Mau Mau and several successful counterinsurgency operations were to greatly affect the local populace support prerequisite for the Mau Mau organization. According to the Mau Mau expert Fred Majdalany, the massacre at Lari on 26 March 1953 "was the definitive horror by which every other act of Mau Mau would be measured."<sup>167</sup> The Mau Mau lost much of the

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<sup>163</sup> Maloba, *Mau Mau and Kenya*, 114.

<sup>164</sup> Condit, "Kenya (1952-1960)," 281.

<sup>165</sup> Kitson, *Bunch of Five*, 8-9.

<sup>166</sup> Condit, "Kenya (1952-1960)," 282.

<sup>167</sup> Fred Majdalany, *State of Emergency: The Full Story of Mau Mau* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1963), 147.

support of the local populace and the Kikuyu began to more freely offer information to the counterinsurgency forces. The Mau Mau had gone too far in their acts of violence.

Another blow to the level of populace support to the Mau Mau was delivered by Operation Anvil in April 1953. Robert B. Asprey argues that though this operation was “criticized, particularly from liberal sources, as unduly harsh, it accomplished its mission: It broke up the Mau Mau support organization in Nairobi and Kiambu, which never recovered. It also eliminated a great deal of crime within the city, and, further, it yielded valuable intelligence.”<sup>168</sup> It separated the populace from the Mau Mau organization.

Though the Mau Mau initially had a significant advantage in the prerequisite for a successful insurgency, local populace support, primarily due to their cause, oath-taking, and counterinsurgency operations, by 1954, primarily due to the Massacre at Lari, and Operation Anvil, this prerequisite had become a significant disadvantage for the Mau Mau.

**c. *Weakness in the Authority***

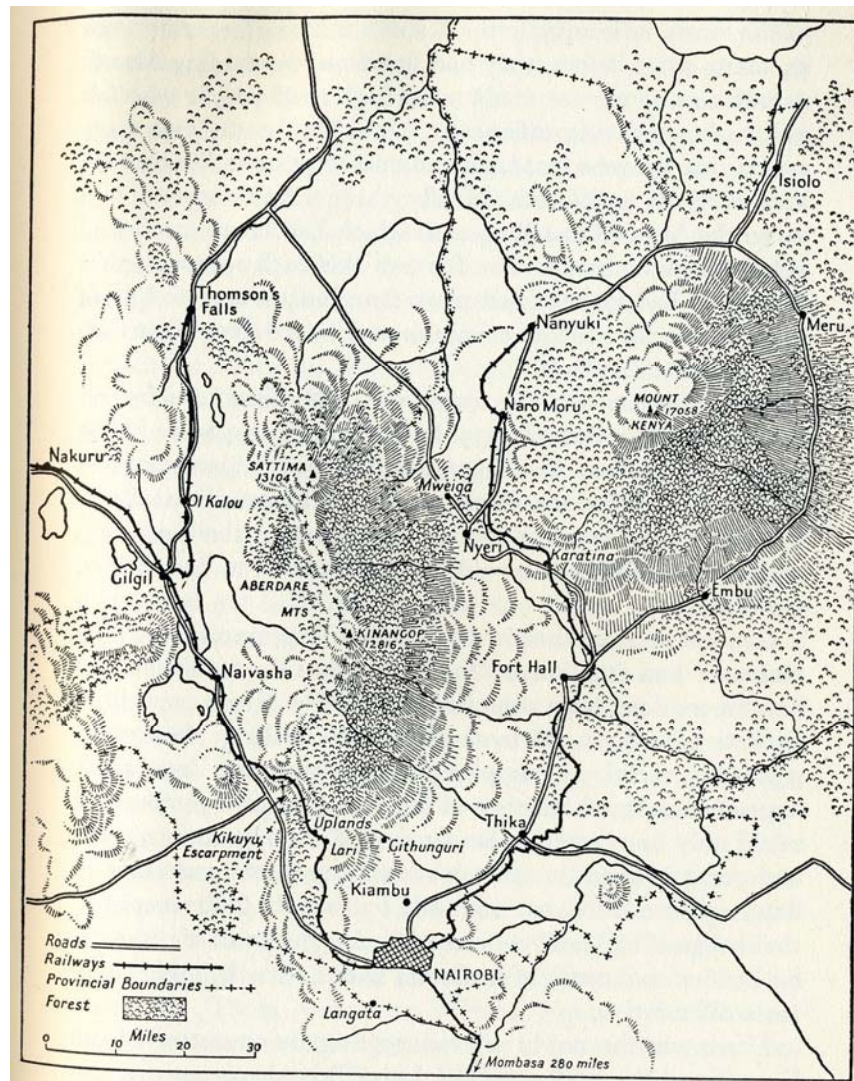
The Mau Mau initially had a significant advantage in the prerequisite for a successful insurgency, weakness in the authority, due to the disorganization, ineffectiveness and lack of leadership within the colonial government of Kenya. The colonial government was determined to be weak, because though confronted with intelligence that the Mau Mau were a growing threat, the governors chose to disregard intelligence estimates. Initial assessments of the Mau Mau threat were not acted upon due to the inadequate governmental organization to access and react to this type of intelligence, and Sir Philip Mitchell, the governor until the summer of 1952, did not agree with these assessments. The leadership of Governor Baring in 1952 and the assignment of General Sir George Erskine as the commander of the East Africa Command in June 1953 strengthened the colonial government and counterinsurgency forces so that this prerequisite quickly became a significant disadvantage for the Mau Mau by 1954.

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<sup>168</sup> Asprey, *War in the Shadows*, 884.

*d. Geographic Conditions*

Kenya is a fertile coastal country which lies directly on the equator and borders the Indian Ocean. Kenya measures approximately 30,000 square miles, ranging in elevation from sea level to 17,000 feet at the top of Mount Kenya. The terrain of Kenya consists of jungles, mountains, scrublands, and fertile farming lands and pastures. The capitol city, Nairobi, is situated in the center of the country.



**Figure 15. Central Kenya, Mau Mau Affected Area, Showing Forest and Mountain Terrain Where Most Operations Took Place**

(From *State of Emergency: The Full Story of Mau Mau* by Fred Majdalany, 1963, 155.)

The prerequisite for a successful insurgency, geographic conditions, was a significant advantage for the Mau Mau during the initial stages of the insurgency. It was determined the forests were safer than the reserves. The forests offered the hope of protection and food, and thus the ranks of the Mau Mau grew. The forests became the main base areas from which to organize and prepare operations against the government. The Mau Mau expert Maloba argues that the forest initially offered security such that it was a sanctuary from which they reorganized, trained, and prepared for operations.<sup>169</sup> This prerequisite was to become a significant disadvantage for the insurgency by mid-1955. The fact that the Kenya insurgency was confined to a small in-land area of approximately two thousand square miles enabled the British to focus both their political and military efforts.

*e. External Support*

The Mau Mau lacked any major external source of support. International political support for the Mau Mau insurgency also did not exist. With the British controlling the borders of Kenya, and little effort made by the Mau Mau to gain external support, the insurgency was forced to look internally for ammunition and arms. According to D. M. Condit, it is estimated that the Mau Mau were only able to acquire or manufacture one weapon for each nine men. The rest were forced to depend upon the panga, a machete-like weapon.<sup>170</sup> The prerequisite for a successful insurgency, external support, was a significant disadvantage for the Mau Mau throughout the insurgency.

*f. Information Advantage*

Initially the prerequisite for a successful insurgency, information advantage, was a significant advantage for the Mau Mau. A lack of information on the Mau Mau movement was to frustrate the authority. The authority lacked a clear understanding of the Mau Mau organization and its goals. Unable to understand the Mau Mau movement initially the authority did not effectively impede the spread of the Mau Mau propaganda. This initial lack of intelligence was primarily due to an ambivalent governor, who failed to heed the warnings of his commissioner of police. According to D. M. Condit, in 1952, the commissioner of police for Kenya determined that “something

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<sup>169</sup> Maloba, *Mau Mau and Kenya*, 115.

<sup>170</sup> Condit, “Kenya (1952-1960),” 284.



in the nature of a general revolt against European settlement and policy of Government has been planned, and ... the plan has already begun to be put into effect.”<sup>171</sup> This assessment was not acted upon due to the inadequate governmental organization to access and react to this type of intelligence, and Sir Philip Mitchell, the governor until the summer of 1952, did not agree with this assessment. When his replacement, Sir Evelyn Baring, took over in September 1952, it was not long before he realized that the government was facing an insurgency.

The Mau Mau’s psychological operations campaign was key to controlling the populace through terror and was also critical to recruitment. This campaign was effective due to the volatile combination of politics, propaganda, and oath-taking.

The Mau Mau wrote messages using an elaborate code and developed a postal system with hidden letter boxes which enabled their organization to effectively communicate with Kikuyu in Nairobi and the reserves. This system enabled the Mau Mau to initially have almost complete intelligence on British movements. Other than using terror to coerce the populace not to pass information to the government, the Mau Mau did little to decrease the information capabilities of the colonial government or counterinsurgency forces. D. M. Condit argues that an example is the fact that “telephone and telegraph wires, though highly vulnerable to sabotage, were seldom cut and then usually only in raids on a single home.”<sup>172</sup>

Another information advantage for the Mau Mau was the language barrier. Very few white settlers spoke the Kikuyu language and interpreters were very limited. This made collecting information extremely difficult for the colonial counterinsurgency forces initially. This language barrier was to be mitigated by the pseudo-gangs and from the Home Guards, security forces for the Kikuyu villages. Information provided from these two sources was utilized to identify active supporters of the Mau Mau; thus, taking the initiative away from the Mau Mau.

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<sup>171</sup> Condit, “Kenya (1952-1960),” 289.

<sup>172</sup> Condit, “Kenya (1952-1960),” 288.

The capture of Waruhiu Itote, a.k.a. General China, one of the major Mau Mau generals, on 15 January 1954 resulted in a decisive shift in the information advantage from the Mau Mau to the counterinsurgency forces. During interrogation General China revealed the location of his headquarters in Mount Kenya and more importantly he revealed the command structure of his forces which stretched from the reserve to Mount Kenya. He revealed the organizational structure of his forces and detailed information on the arms and ammunition situation of the Mau Mau. By mid-1954, this prerequisite was a significant disadvantage for the Mau Mau.

## **5. Conclusion**

D. M. Condit argues that the Mau Mau's choice of open violence in opposition to the colonial government was illogical for the following reasons: (1) the inland geographical location of the Kikuyu tribe; (2) British control of Kenya's borders; and (3) the lack of any major external source of support.<sup>173</sup> Though the movement failed militarily, it is credited with creating the social unrest that further divided the white colonial settlers in Kenya and the British government that ultimately led to the independence of Kenya in 1963. Furthermore, many Africans, and the surviving Mau Mau believe that they forced the British timing of turning independence of Kenya over to the Kenyan populace.

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<sup>173</sup> Condit, "Kenya (1952-1960)," 280.

Prerequisites for a successful insurgency	Initial	Final
A Cause to Fight For	●	○
Local Populace Support	●	○
Weakness in the Authority	●	○
Geographic Conditions	●	○
External Support	○	○
Information Advantage	●	○

**Legend**

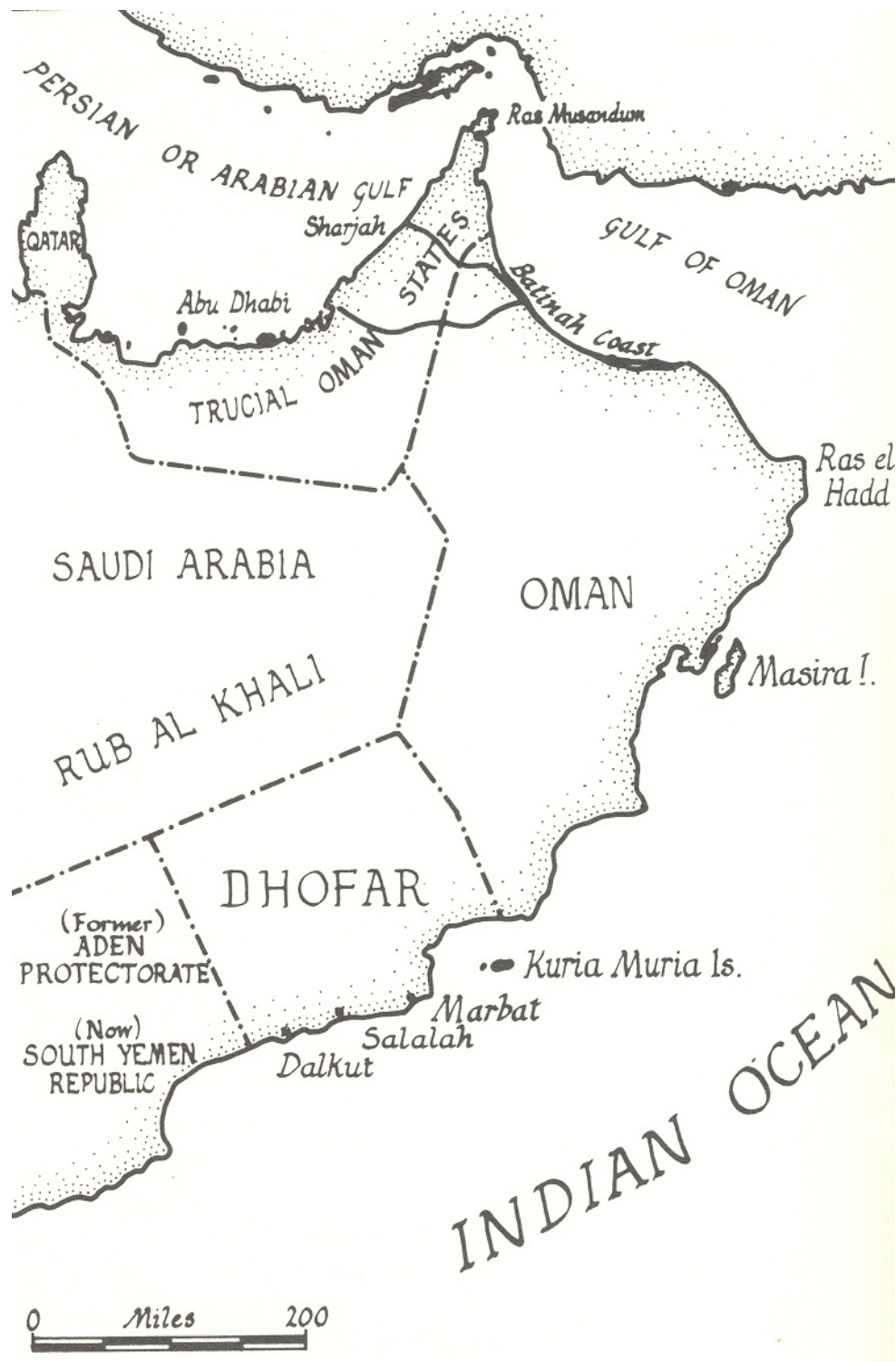
- Significant Advantage
- ▨ Limited Advantage
- ▤ Limited Disadvantage
- Significant Disadvantage

**Figure 16. Kenya Emergency (1952-1960) Prerequisites for a Successful Insurgency Chart**

Using a Likert scale to examine the Kenya Emergency against the prerequisites for a successful insurgency, it is observed that the Mau Mau initially had a significant advantage in all prerequisites, except external support, which was a significant disadvantage for the Mau Mau. All the prerequisites for a successful insurgency were to be significant disadvantages for the Mau Mau by mid-1954.

It is important to note that though the Mau Mau movement failed militarily many argue that they may have still won politically. Jomo Kenyatta would go on to become independent Kenya's first Prime Minister (1963–1964) and President (1964–1978). Once imprisoned by the colonial government under the suspicion of being the leader of the Mau Mau movement he is now considered the founding father of the Kenyan Nation.

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**Figure 17. Dhofar (1962-1976)**

(From *Brush Fire Wars: Minor Campaigns of the British Army since 1945* by Michael Dewar, 1990, 166.)

## **F. DHO FAR REBELLION (1962-1976)**

### **1. Background**

The Sultanate of Oman was a British protectorate from the 1870s to 1971. The Treaty of Seeb in 1920 established a sharing of power between the Imam and Sultan of Oman that would last until 1955. This treaty granted the Imam of Oman autonomous rule in the interior, where the tribes had pledged their allegiance to their religious leader, the Imam. The treaty also recognized the nominal sovereignty of the Sultan of Oman within the interior. Thus a situation was created where the Sultan of Oman controlled the capital city of Muscat, but had little influence or control over the interior of Oman. This power sharing arrangement was fine until the discovery of oil greatly increased the importance of the interior regions of Oman. In order to create a secure environment in which to drill oil, the Sultan of Oman, Sa'id bin Taimur, began a campaign with the goal of gaining control of the interior of Oman. This campaign was to worsen the already tenuous power sharing relationship between the Sultan and the Imam. Tensions between the Sultan and the Imam were to result in the Jebel Akhdar war, in Arabic Jebel Akhdar means "Green Mountains," an internal Oman conflict which lasted from 1957 to 1959. The Jebel Akhdar war saw the defeat of the forces of the Imam of Oman, which were backed by Saudi Arabia, by Omani forces loyal to the Sultan of Oman, which were greatly assisted by the British, especially the Special Air Service (SAS). It is interesting to note that many historians credit the Jebel Akhdar campaign in Oman with preventing the disbandment of the British SAS after the completion of the Mayalan Conflict. Following the Jebel Akhdar war, the Sultan of Oman terminated the 1920 Treaty of Seeb and outlawed the office of the Imam of Oman.

During the Jebel Akhdar campaign Sultan Sa'id bin Taimur in 1958 had taken residence in the Dhofar provincial capital, Salalah. The Sultan was to rarely leave Salalah again. The scholar John Newsinger argues that of all of the provinces of Oman, the Sultan ruled Dhofar the most oppressively. The Sultan had an intense dislike for the Dhofari people, as illustrated by this comment made to Corran Purdon: "If you are out walking and meet a Dhofari and a snake, tread on the Dhofari."<sup>174</sup> The Sultan's

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<sup>174</sup> John Newsinger, *British Counterinsurgency: From Palestine to Northern Ireland* (Great Britain: Palgrave, 2002), 140.

oppressive treatment of the Dhofari people was to set the conditions for rebellion in the Dhofar province. The historian John Townsend has noted that gradually, the tribal warfare, long part of the history of Dhofar, became organized opposition to the rule of the Sultan.<sup>175</sup> The figure below lists the major political and military insurgent and counterinsurgent forces involved in the Dhofar Rebellion between 1962 and 1976, which was waged primarily in the Dhofar province of Oman.

<u><b>Insurgent Forces</b></u>		<u><b>Counterinsurgent Forces</b></u>	
DLF	Dhofar Liberation Front	SAF	Sultanate of Muscat and Oman
PFLOAG	Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman and the Arabian Gulf	Sultan's Armed Forces	
PFLO	Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman	SAS	British Special Air Service
			Iranian
			Jordanian Special Forces

**Figure 18. Dhofar Rebellion Insurgent and Counterinsurgent Forces**

## **2. Insurgency Strategy**

In 1962 the Dhofar Liberation Front (DLF) was organized by tribesmen from the interior of the Dhofar province. Initially the rebellion was nothing more than a sporadic campaign of mine laying, ambushes, and stand-off attacks. The withdrawal of British forces in 1967 from neighboring Aden, and the subsequent establishment of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY), a communist government, was to have a profound affect on the direction of the Dhofar rebellion. The strong ethnic ties between the Dhofari tribesmen and the people of southern PDRY greatly facilitated the PDRY's take over of the Dhofar rebellion. Many of the insurgents from Dhofar were trained and equipped by the PDRY. These tribesmen then returned to Dhofar to indoctrinate their fellow tribesmen. The historian Michael Dewar argues that the PDRY sought to use the Dhofar insurgents in an effort to support their strategy of seizing first Oman, then the other oil rich Arabian states.<sup>176</sup>

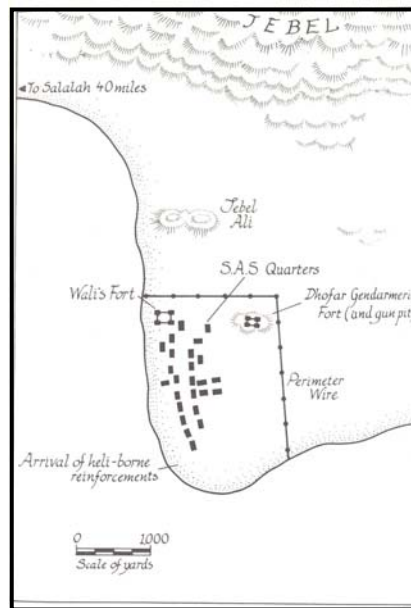
On 28 April 1966 the DLF attempted to assassinate the Sultan. This attempt resulted in the Sultan becoming a near recluse in his palace in Salalah. From his palace the Sultan was to continue to orchestrate harsh reprisals on the Dhofari populace. By the end of 1967 the forces were at a point of stalemate. The insurgents' strength was such

<sup>175</sup> John Townsend, *Oman: The Making of the Modern State* (London: Biddles, Ltd., 1977), 97.

<sup>176</sup> Dewar, *Brush Fire War*, 167.

that they now dominated the Jebel, but they were unable to seriously threaten the capital, Jelalah. In August 1968 the DLF became the People's Front for the Liberation of the Oman and the Arabian Gulf (PFLOAG). By 1970 the PFLOAG was in control of almost the entire Dhofar province. A coup in July 1970 replaced the Sultan with his son, Qaboos. The development and execution of a new counterinsurgency strategy by Qaboos was to prove instrumental in the defeat of the insurgency. The successful implementation of Qaboos' counterinsurgency strategy forced the insurgents to attempt a large-scale operation in order to boost morale of their men and credibility of their organization.

On 18 July 1972 the insurgents, in an attempt to bolster the faltering morale of their troops, attempted to execute a conventional style attack on the settlement of Marbat illustrated below. The settlement of Marbat was situated forty miles east of Salalah



**Figure 19. The Battle of Marbat, 19 July 1972**

(From *Brush Fire Wars: Minor Campaigns of the British Army since 1945* by Michael Dewar, 1990, 171.)

and less than two miles south of the Jebel. The Marbat garrison was manned with twenty-five Dhofari Gendarme, thirty local firqa, thirty Askari warriors from northern Oman, and



ten SAS soldiers commanded by Captain Mike Kealy. It is estimated that the overall effective strength of this garrison was actually 76 men.<sup>177</sup>

The DLF massed approximately two hundred and fifty tribesmen for what was to be the largest attack of the insurgency. Though outnumbered by more than three to one the garrison was able to repel the insurgent attack through the use of air support and the timely arrival of reinforcements in the form of eighteen SAS soldiers.

As freedom of movement was slowly taken away and supply lines were severely impeded or even cut by 1974, the insurgents realized that they could not hope to continue the fight in the province of Dhofar. Attempts to expand the insurgency to northern Oman in 1972 and 1974, primarily through assassinations met with disaster. The insurgent cells were identified by Oman Intelligence Service and captured and tried. The leaders of the insurgency also began to realize that their cause was not well received in other areas of Oman and the support of the local populace in these areas could not be relied upon.

### **3. The Counterinsurgency Strategy**

The Sultan's initial reaction to the insurgency was to imprison tribesmen, destroy water wells, and generally increase the volume of harsh reprisals. By 1970 it had become apparent to the British that Sultan Sa'id bin Taimur was in danger of losing all of Dhofar to the insurgents. With the assistance of the British, the Sultan's son, Qaboos, executed a virtually bloodless coup forcing Sultan Sa'id to relinquish power to his son on 23 July 1970. The British viewed Qaboos, a Sandhurst graduate, as a more capable and progressive leader than his father.

Qaboos requested military assistance from the British immediately following the successful coup. The British initially provided an SAS advisory team that would develop the counterinsurgency campaign for defeating the insurgents. The ever increasing revenues from oil enabled Qaboos to improve and expand the Sultan's Armed Forces (SAF). Counterinsurgency scholar Leroy Thompson has noted that the SAF utilized British contract officers and the best enlisted soldiers were Baluchis contracted from

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<sup>177</sup> Dewar, *Brush Fire Wars*, 170.

Pakistan.<sup>178</sup> John Townsend has noted that with the assistance of the SAS advisory team a new strategy, which contained five separate elements, was approved by Qaboos:<sup>179</sup>

- The offer of a general amnesty to all those of his subjects who had opposed the Sultan.
- The ending of the archaic status of the Dhofar province and its incorporation into the state of Oman.
- Effective military opposition to those insurgents who did not accept the general amnesty offer.
- A vigorous nation-wide development program targeted at improving the lives of the populace.
- A diplomatic initiative with two aims:

Aim #1: Having Oman recognized as an Arab state with a legal form of government.

Aim #2: Isolating the PDRY from the support it was receiving from other Arab states.

Qaboos moved quickly to mitigate the many abuses his father had committed on the Dhofari tribesmen. Most importantly Qaboos developed a civil campaign focused on improving the medical and educational facilities within the Dhofar province. Qaboos also offered amnesty for those Dhofari tribesmen that had been taking part in the insurgency against his father the Sultan. Even though the amnesty and civic programs were producing results, it was obvious that the insurgency had taken hold in the Jebel and only military operations would displace the insurgents. The combination of a string of successful counterinsurgency military actions on the Jebel and the fact that by mid-1976 all five elements of Qaboos' strategy were a success in the Dhofar province ultimately resulted in the defeat of the insurgency.

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<sup>178</sup> Leroy Thompson, *Ragged War: The Story of Unconventional and Counter-Revolutionary Warfare* (New York: Arms and Armour Press, 1994), 50.

<sup>179</sup> Townsend, *Oman*, 101.

#### 4. Prerequisites of Successful Insurgencies

##### a. *A Cause to Fight For*

The prerequisite for a successful insurgency, a cause to fight for, was initially a significant advantage for the Dhofari insurgents. John Townsend identified that the primary issue, which insurgents were able to gain local support for, was the Sultan's very presence in Salalah and the feeling of personal oppression by the Dhofari people as a result of his oppressive and harsh attempts to subjugate them to his rule.<sup>180</sup> The environment created by the Sultan in Dhofar was perfect for fomenting an insurgency to overthrow the government.

The historian Townsend also noted that the DLF had very limited aims, and in a proclamation issued on 9 June 1965 they called for the

liberating of this country from the rule of the despotic Al Bu Said Sultan whose dynasty has been identified with the hordes of the British imperialist occupation...This people has long suffered from dispersion, unemployment, poverty, illiteracy and disease...<sup>181</sup>

This proclamation was simply in Townsend's own words "the product of an economic and social frustration inflamed by mindless political oppression."<sup>182</sup>

The strategy developed by Qaboos was to mitigate the issues described in this DLF proclamation. Qaboos focused resources and oil revenues on civil projects to effectively improve the lives of the populace of the Dhofar province and their attitudes toward the government. Townsend argues that by mid-1975 Dhofaris no longer considered themselves second-class citizens of the state of Oman, and had actually taken what many considered a disproportionate share of positions in the government of Oman.<sup>183</sup> By 1972 the insurgency no longer had a significant advantage in this prerequisite, and by mid-1974 this prerequisite had become a significant disadvantage.

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<sup>180</sup> Townsend, *Oman*, 97.

<sup>181</sup> Townsend, *Oman*, 98.

<sup>182</sup> Townsend, *Oman*, 98.

<sup>183</sup> Townsend, *Oman*, 102-103.

**b. Local Populace Support**

The insurgents, often using torture to coerce the local populace, did a poor job of winning the support of the Dhofar province populace. Ironically, the Sultan's harsh reprisals were abhorred more by the Dhofari populace, and when combined with the strong tribal ties among the Jebelis it is easy to see why the insurgents were able to act in this way and still win significant support from the local populace. With the harsh conditions and numerous missteps of the Sultan, the insurgent forces initially had a significant advantage in the prerequisite for a successful insurgency, local populace support.

The populace of Dhofar in the 1970s was estimated at 30,000 to 50,000.<sup>184</sup> The authority of Sultan Sa'id was limited to the confines of the long and narrow plain of which Salalah was the economic center and his influence in the mountains was extremely weak. The Sultan's increased use of force in an attempt to destroy the insurgency following the 9 June 1965 proclamation enabled the DLF to require the necessary momentum to challenge the Sultan. Following an assassination attempt on the Sultan, on 28 April 1966, a virtual blockade was imposed on the Jebel in retaliation. This action only served to increase the local populace's support for the insurgency.

The counterinsurgency scholar Leroy Thompson argues that

Sultan Sa'id had purposely kept Oman as backward as possible to avoid corruption of western influences and modernization. In his efforts to safeguard his population from these perceived evils, the Sultan did not even allow those who left Oman for an education to return to the country.<sup>185</sup>

He feared that their exposure to Western culture would lead to further unrest. Though Sultan Sa'id was accumulating oil revenues, he did not invest in the educational, medical, or social infrastructure of Oman, and especially not in the Dhofar province.

In contrast, immediately following the coup and for the next five years, Qaboos placed great emphasis on economic, social, and infrastructure projects. After the Sultan's neglect of the Dhofaris, it was easy to sway the support of the populace as

<sup>184</sup> Newsinger, *British Counterinsurgency*, 140.

<sup>185</sup> Thompson, *Ragged War*, 49.

contractors appeared and began to build projects such as hospitals, schools, roads, houses, electricity supply and water supply. The insurgents lacked the capability to either match or stop these projects.

Qaboos also implemented two other programs that affected the insurgents' advantage in this prerequisite: amnesty and resettlement. Soon after the coup in July 1970 Qaboos offered a general amnesty to all insurgents. Initially, at least 200 insurgents accepted the amnesty and most joined the Firqats.<sup>186</sup> By the end of the Dhofar Rebellion almost 2000 insurgents had surrendered under this amnesty program.<sup>187</sup> Qaboos also executed a successful resettlement program. The government was able to resettle many of the mountainous areas left vacant due to the insurgency. Many of these resettled areas were now guarded by the ex-insurgents, now re-armed and equipped and members of the SAS trained Firqats. By late 1973 this prerequisite had become a significant disadvantage for the insurgents.

**c. *Weakness in the Authority***

The Dhofari insurgents initially had a significant advantage in the prerequisite for a successful insurgency, weakness in the authority, because as John Townsend has noted, Sultan Sa'id's "strategy – negative, repressive, punitive, unimaginative – was perhaps the greatest single source of strength to his enemies."<sup>188</sup> The Dhofar Rebellion developed slowly, but the Sultan took no imaginative or preventive steps to slow the growth of the insurgency. Use of force and reprisal seemed to be his only strategy. Concessions, which may have stopped the insurgency in its infant stage, were not possible due to his immense dislike of the Dhofaris.

The SAF conceded the Jebel to the insurgents from mid-June to mid-September due to the monsoonal fogs. The SAF believed that the low visibility created supply problems that could not be overcome. In other words the government ceded the initiative to the insurgents for three months out of a year; failing to even to try to impede the insurgents' resupply efforts and freedom of movement. Villages and positions that

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<sup>186</sup> Thompson, *Ragged War*, 49.

<sup>187</sup> Townsend, *Oman*, 102.

<sup>188</sup> Townsend, *Oman*, 101.

had been lost to SAF forces were often re-occupied by unopposed insurgent forces during this three month pause. Starting in 1971 the insurgents lost this advantage. Using many of the ex-insurgents that had taken advantage of the amnesty program, the government occupied numerous posts in the mountains during the monsoonal fogs and greatly impeded the insurgents' flow of supplies.

With supply lines being increasingly interdicted by the government and morale dropping within the insurgent forces, the decision was made to execute what was to be the insurgency's largest assault of the conflict. Hoping to show the weakness of the government the settlement of Marbat was chosen. The insurgent forces were unable to recover from their defeat at the Marbat settlement on 18 July 1972; and they were unable to ever organize enough forces to execute a similar attack for the rest of the conflict.

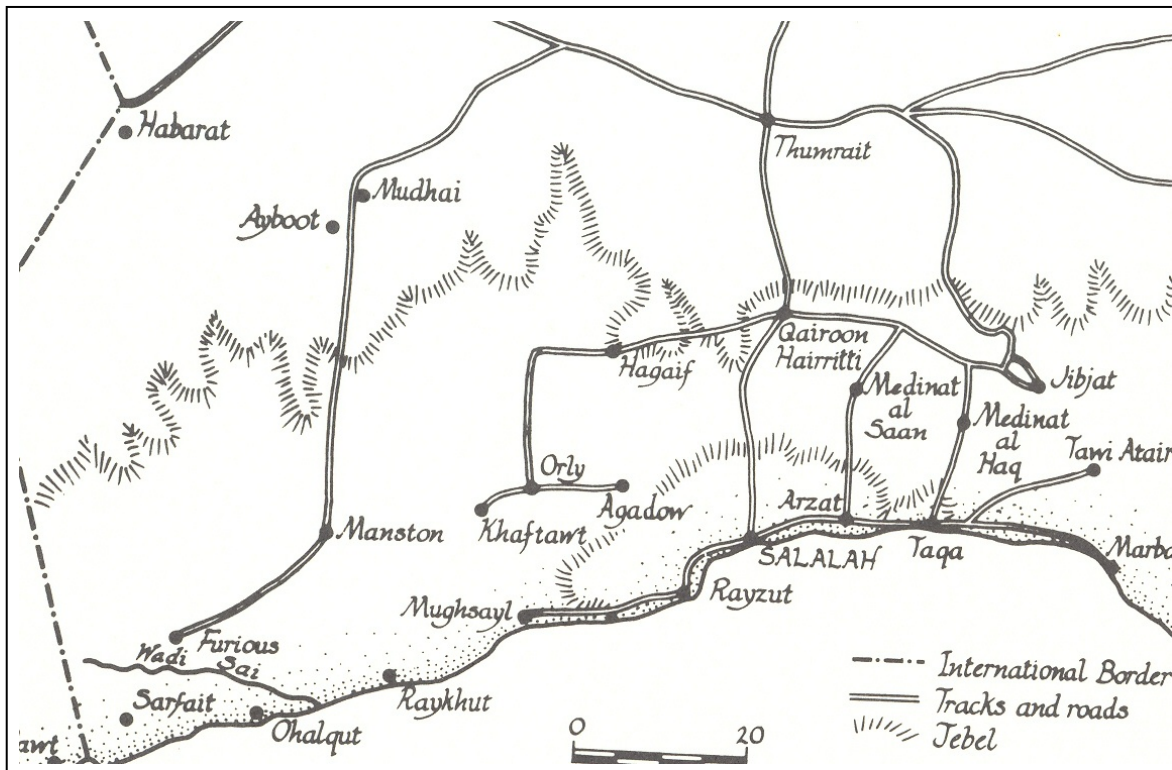
The change in leadership of Oman following the bloodless coup of the Sultan was to prove disastrous for the insurgency. With Qaboos assuming power and successfully implementing all five elements of his new strategy for defeating the insurgency, this prerequisite was to become a significant disadvantage for the insurgency by late 1972.

#### ***d. Geographic Conditions***

The Sultanate of Oman occupied 82,000 square miles and was situated between South Yemen and the Gulf of Oman. The Dhofar province is the southern-most province of the Sultanate of Oman, and is separated from the rest of Oman by five hundred miles of desert. The coastal plain of the Dhofar province is dominated by the Jebel, mountainous terrain which is ideal for an insurgency. Michael Dewar accurately described the Jebel Akhdar as "one of the greatest natural fortresses in the world, a sheer limestone massif forty to fifty miles in length and twenty miles wide with peaks rising nearly 10,000 feet."<sup>189</sup> Caves and gullies perfect for insurgent warfare are found in abundance. The figure below illustrates how dominant the Jebel was on the geography of the Dhofar province and the capital, Salalah.

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<sup>189</sup> Dewar, *Brush Fire Wars*, 85.



**Figure 20. Dhofar with the Jebel Highlighted**

(From *Brush Fire Wars: Minor Campaigns of the British Army since 1945* by Michael Dewar, 1990, 169.)

The prerequisite for a successful insurgency, geographic conditions, was a significant advantage for the insurgency initially. The new state, the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY), offered sanctuary for insurgents just across the border. Insurgents trained in PDRY then infiltrated back into Dhofar. The border between the Dhofar province of Oman and the PDRY was undeveloped country that few traveled. The harshness and isolation of the terrain along the border enabled the insurgents to sustain themselves logistically with supplies and trained recruits. Unable to stem this flow of supplies and recruits the insurgents had the initiative.

Then in March 1974 the Hornbeam Line was constructed by British and Jordanian engineers under the protection of an Omani battalion. The Hornbeam Line consisted of a line of mines and wire that ran from the coast fifty-three kilometers inland. It was constructed ninety kilometers from the border of PDRY. Accelerating

counterinsurgent operations following the completion of the Hornbeam Line resulted in the isolation of insurgent forces in a small area along the PDRY border. By May 1975, the manmade Hornbeam Line had helped mitigate the insurgent forces' advantage in geography making this prerequisite a significant disadvantage for the insurgents. This structure had effectively restricted resupply to the insurgent forces located in central and eastern Dhofar.

*e. External Support*

The prerequisite for a successful insurgency, external support, was a significant advantage for the insurgency initially. The insurgents received external support from PDRY, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, China, Libya, Soviet Union, and Cuba. The PDRY provided sanctuary, training, and supplies for Dhofari insurgent forces. At the peak of the rebellion four companies of PDRY regulars had been operating in support of the insurgency within Dhofar, but by October 1975 this support was withdrawn.<sup>190</sup>

This external support was to be off-set by the external support provided to the Oman government primarily in the form of troops and expertise. The support provided to the government of Oman was to prove instrumental in the defeat of the insurgency. The British SAS was tasked with organizing, training, and leading the Firqats, the Dhofari counterinsurgency force. Much of this force was made up of converted insurgents. Leroy Thompson has noted that at the same time "Royal Engineers and medical personnel worked closely with the SAS on civic action programmes to win the hearts and minds of the Jebelis."<sup>191</sup> British pilots also organized and flew in the newly established Sultan of Oman's Air Force (SOAF).

The counterinsurgent forces were able to greatly impede the flow of arms to the PFLO in 1972 when the Shah of Iran persuaded China to curtail their aid to the insurgents. In 1972 Jordan provided an infantry regiment and in 1973 Iran provided 1500 troops.<sup>192</sup> Successful operations by Iranian troops in December 1974 and January 1975 were instrumental in setting the conditions which enabled the SAF to capture the village

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<sup>190</sup> Dewar, *Brush Fire Wars*, 176.

<sup>191</sup> Thompson, *Ragged War*, 50.

<sup>192</sup> Dewar, *Brush Fire Wars: Minor Campaigns of the British Army since 1945*, 170.



of Rakhyut, the last settlement held by insurgent forces in Dhofar. By late 1972 this prerequisite was quickly becoming a significant disadvantage for the insurgents.

***f. Information Advantage***

Initially the prerequisite for a successful insurgency, information advantage, was a significant advantage for the insurgency. The actions of the Sultan were the best propaganda tool that the insurgents could have dreamed of. With conditions already extremely tyrannical and harsh in Dhofar, the Sultans unimaginative and predictable reprisals were used to reinforce and emphasize the validity of the insurgents' cause.

Transistor radios were used effectively as part of the insurgent propaganda campaign. Leroy Thompson has noted that Radio Aden transmitted propaganda across the entire Jebel in support of the PFLO.<sup>193</sup> After Iranian forces occupied the road from Salalah to Thumrait in December 1973, with the permission of the government of Oman, much of the insurgents' propaganda effort was focused on retaking this critical road. The propaganda war over this road was to be won by the government. Soon after gaining control of the road, the road was modernized with blacktop; thus, restoring the freedom of movement of the populace and the hope of an economic improvement due to potential commerce.

The government's campaign to encourage insurgents to defect greatly impacted the insurgency. The change in the regime's attitude toward the populace encouraged fence-sitters such as Mohammed Suhail to surrender. Formally a soldier in the Trucial Oman Scouts, he was co-opted to work in the Sultan's Intelligence Staff. Much like the pseudo-gangs of Kenya, ex-insurgents were to provide the critical intelligence needed to defeat this insurgency. The initial advantage provided by this prerequisite to the insurgency was lost in December 1973, and became a significant disadvantage by mid-1974.

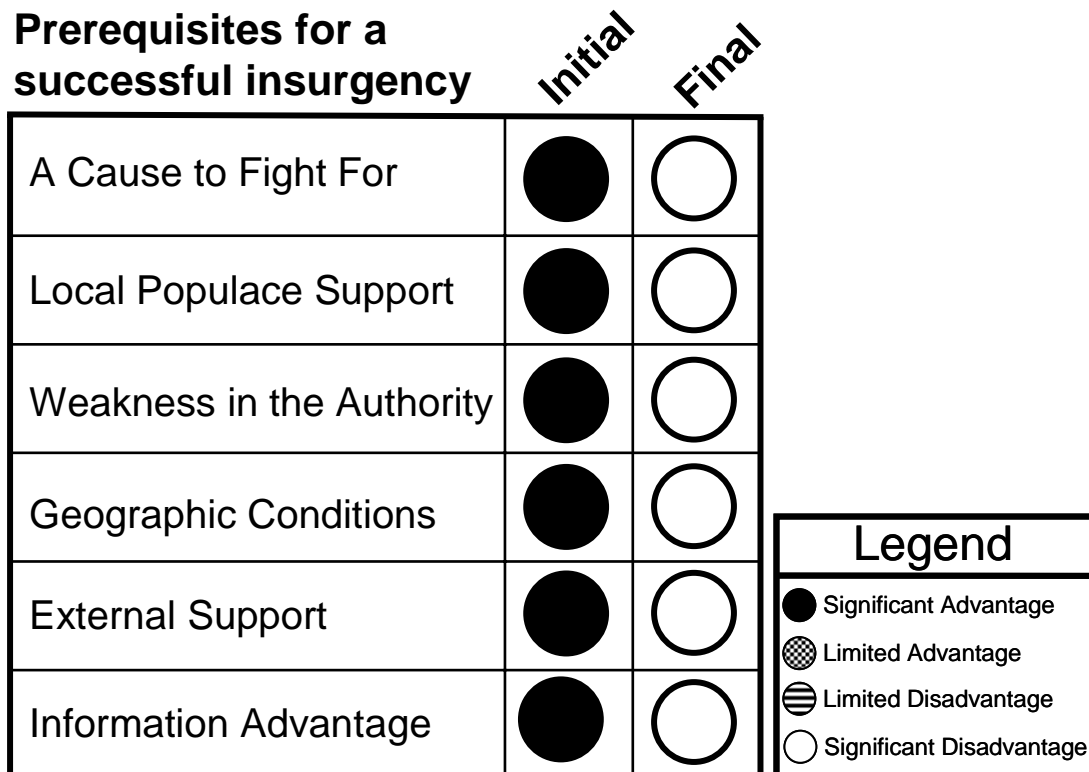
**5. Conclusion**

The communist insurgency in the Dhofar province was completely defeated by the government of Oman. Though faced with serious initial setbacks, the government of

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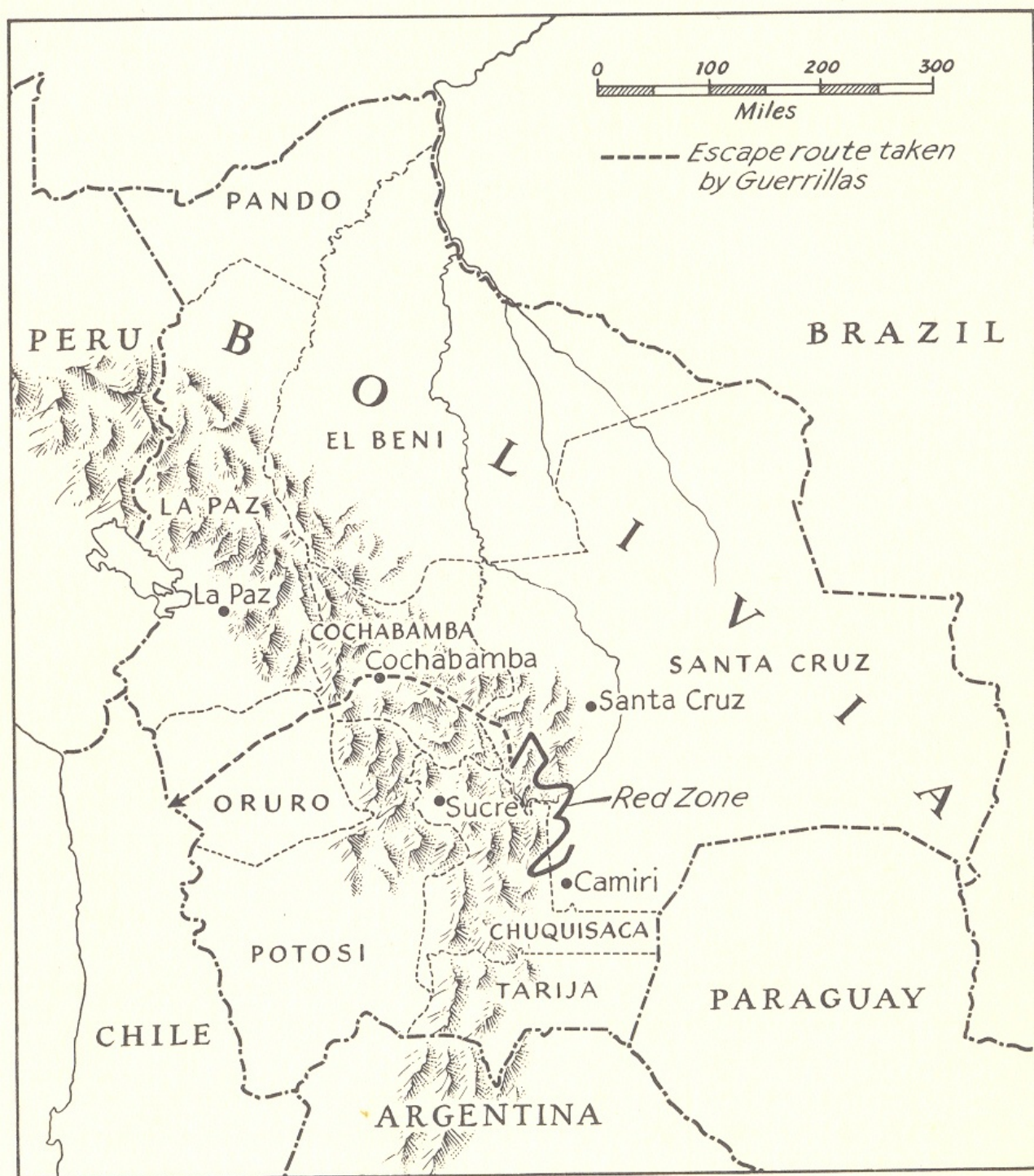
<sup>193</sup> Thompson, *Ragged War*, 50.

Oman was able to overwhelm the insurgency primarily due to the British orchestrated coup of the Sultan, the competent leadership of Qaboos, and the extensive external support received by the government. This insurgency was unable to overcome the externally supported government of Oman, even when the Sultan only controlled the capital, Salalah.



**Figure 21. Dhofar Rebellion (1962-1976) Prerequisites for a Successful Insurgency Chart**

Using a Likert scale to examine the Dhofar Rebellion against the prerequisites for a successful insurgency, it is observed that the insurgents initially had a significant advantage in all prerequisites. All the prerequisites for a successful insurgency were to be significant disadvantages for the insurgents by mid-1974.



**Figure 22. Bolivia**

(From *The Complete Bolivian Diaries of Ché Guevara and other Captured Documents* by Daniel James, 1968, 10.)

## **G. BOLIVIA (1966-1968)**

### **1. Background**

Ernesto “Ché” Guevara was born in 1928 to an aristocratic family in Argentina. In 1948 he attended the University of Buenos Aires and eventually finished medical school. During his subsequent travels throughout South and Central America, Guevara experienced revolution and insurgency. He gained experience and knowledge when he observed the mobilization of Bolivian workers after the 1952 revolution, and the U.S. backed overthrow of the Guatemala revolutionary government of Jacobo Arbenz in 1954. Because of the latter event Guevara became a dedicated fighter against U.S. imperialism in Latin America. Guevara later met Fidel Castro in Mexico as he prepared for an insurrectionary war against the Cuban dictator Fulgencio Batista. In Mexico he studied Marxism and became an ideological communist. In 1956 he traveled to Cuba with Castro and then in 1959, following the Cuban Revolution, he became a Cuban citizen. In 1965 he left Cuba to spread the revolutionary struggle. Guevara chose Bolivia to launch a revolution.

Guevara became disillusioned with life in post-revolutionary Cuba, and was convinced that South America was ideal for waging revolutionary war using the *foco* concept. The Cuban dictator Fidel Castro and his long time friend, Guevara, hoped to turn South America into another Vietnam for the United States with Bolivia at the center of the conflict. They both believed that if they could start a revolution in Bolivia that forces from the United States would be sent to support the Bolivian government. The presence of American forces in Bolivia would agitate its neighbors and the revolution could be spread through South America. Bolivia was to be the base from which revolution would be spread through out South America.

In November 1964, Paz Estenssoro, who had ruled Bolivia since 1952, was replaced by Generals Alfredo Ovando and Rene Barrientos. With Bolivia now under the rule of military dictators, Guevara believed that igniting a revolution in Bolivia was possible. In 1965 the French Socialist Regis Debray wrote, “Bolivia is the country where the subjective and objective conditions are best combined. It is the only country in South

America where Socialist revolution is on the agenda.”<sup>194</sup> The general assessment among revolutionaries was that the conditions in Bolivia were sufficient for a revolution.

## **2. Insurgency Strategy**

At the Tri-continental Conference held in Havana in 1966, the decision was made to set up a training center for guerrilla fighters in Bolivia. Guevara’s representative at the conference argued that a national guerilla war had little chance of success and it was essential to set up a regional coordination at a minimum on the logistical and political fronts. Guevara’s plan called for an international base to be set up in Bolivia. Bolivia was primarily selected because it was geopolitically situated in the center of South America. From this base guerrilla columns could infiltrate into neighboring countries and spread revolution throughout South America.

Guevara entered Bolivia in November 1966 via the La Paz airport. He was later joined by twelve other Cuban revolutionaries, who believed that they would form the initial *foco* of the revolution in Bolivia. Guevara’s force, the National Liberation Army of Bolivia (ELN), never exceeded more than fifty fighters through out the conflict. Guevara’s strategy was to apply his *foco* theory in Bolivia. Guevara believed that his experience in the Cuban revolution demonstrated that revolutionaries did not have to wait for the necessary conditions to be present in a country; that a revolutionary force could actually create the necessary conditions.

The ELN was well equipped, in comparison to the Bolivian Army, initially thanks to Cuban financing. In February 1967 Guevara conducted the first operation from his base camp, a reconnaissance mission. During this mission Guevara’s security was compromised and the Bolivian military were now aware that he was in the country. Guevara’s forces initially achieved a number of successes on the tactical level, primarily ambushes, March to May 1967, but were being forced further and further into the inhospitable and isolated mountainous jungle.

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<sup>194</sup> Regis Debray, *Strategy for Revolution: Essays on Latin America* (London: Ebenezer Baylis and Son, 1970), 38.

### **3. The Counterinsurgency Strategy**

The incompetence of the Bolivian military is the only thing that enabled Guevara to last as long as he did. Though Guevara had the initiative initially, the Bolivian military's advantage in numbers and capabilities was to quickly tip the scales in their favor once the fighting began.

External support was also provided by the United States to the Bolivian government which helped with developing the forces necessary for fighting an effective counterinsurgency against Guevara. The Central Intelligence Agency sent several operatives to Bolivia to aid with the search for Guevara. The United States Army signed a Memorandum of Understanding concerning the activation, organization, and training of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Bolivian Ranger Battalion on 28 April 1967. The assistance provided by this agreement was to result in an effective counterinsurgency force that tracked down and killed Guevara by October 1967.

### **4. Prerequisites of Successful Insurgencies**

#### ***a. A Cause to Fight For***

The prerequisite for a successful insurgency, a cause to fight for, was a significant disadvantage for Guevara for the duration of the conflict. Guevara based his campaign in Bolivia on the cause – revolution throughout South America. This cause did not appeal to the Bolivian people and therefore gained little support. A cause based on land also did not garner the support of the populace. Bolivia had just had a revolution, and the government had ordered extensive land redistribution. The Indians in the region that Guevara was to operate did not consider themselves landless. The Bolivian military officer Gary P. Salmon argues that many of them had owned their land for generations and this region had largely not experienced the conditions of exploitation and servitude that western Bolivia had, and which resulted in the Agrarian Reform after the National Revolution in 1953.<sup>195</sup>

#### ***b. Local Populace Support***

Guevara's forces had a significant disadvantage in the prerequisite for a successful insurgency, local populace support, throughout the conflict. There was not an

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<sup>195</sup> Gary P. Salmon, *The Defeat of Ché Guevara: Military Response to Guerilla Challenge in Bolivia*, trans. John Deredita (New York: Praeger, 1990), 38.

organization within the populace to supply the insurgents. The British counterinsurgency expert Frank Kitson observes that lack of local populace support prevented Guevara's insurgency from obtaining the required recruits, food, medicine, and supplies.<sup>196</sup>

Bolivian military officer Gary P. Salmon points out that the portion of the Bolivian populace that Guevara attempted to recruit to his cause were remote from power of the authority and were accustomed to relying on themselves. They were also the guardians of the recently discovered oil wealth. The development of the infrastructure of oil drilling and transporting and oil revenues had brought a new prosperity to this region of Bolivia. The economy of Bolivia at the end of 1966 was relatively favorable due to: increasing oil production, spreading agriculture, modest industrial expansion, and infrastructure work.<sup>197</sup> Military historian David Rooney observed that though conditions in the tin mines were appalling for workers, and the Indians lived in poverty, there was no impoverished populace waiting to be liberated by Guevara.<sup>198</sup>

Both Castro and Guevara had misled the leaders of the Bolivian Communist Party reference their true intentions for Bolivia. The Bolivians believed that the insurgency in Bolivia was to set the conditions for a future campaign in Argentina. According to David Rooney, when the Bolivian Communist Party leader, Mario Monje, learned that Guevara intended to lead the forces in Bolivia he said, "that when the people of Bolivia found out that the guerrilla movement was led by a foreigner; they would turn their back on it."<sup>199</sup> This rift between the BCP and Guevara was to result in the Bolivians providing very few soldiers. Guevara was also unable to go directly to the people for recruitment in the region since his men had learned Quechua instead of the local Indian language, Tupí-Guaraní. Lack of Bolivian recruits was to leave Guevara's force always under strength.

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<sup>196</sup> Kitson, *Low Intensity Operations*, 34.

<sup>197</sup> Salmon, *Defeat of Ché Guevara*, 36, 45.

<sup>198</sup> David Rooney, *Guerrilla: Insurgents, Patriots and Terrorists from Sun Tzu to Bin Laden* (London: Brassey's, 2004), 216.

<sup>199</sup> Rooney, *Guerrilla*, 216.

*c. Weakness in the Authority*

Guevara initially had a limited advantage in the prerequisite for a successful insurgency, weakness in the authority. This limited advantage was primarily due to the ineffectiveness of the authority and the fact that the authority did not know he was in Bolivia. Once the authority discovered that Guevara was in Bolivia this limited advantage quickly became a significant disadvantage. The fact that Guevara had incorrectly evaluated both the government and the level of populace support for the authority contributed to Guevara's disadvantage.

Gary P. Salmon argues that in the Bolivian Army in 1966 there was an educational and training divide between subordinate officers and their commanders. There had been some training for subordinates on insurgency, but at the higher levels of command insurgency was treated in a very superficial and theoretical manner. These higher level staffs were unwilling to consider other than conventional warfare, and did not comprehend what the appearance of the guerrilla *focos* in Bolivia meant.<sup>200</sup> Though many believed the Bolivian Army to be incompetent it still had a far superior number of soldiers than the insurgents. Additionally, these soldiers had a significant advantage since they were familiar with the terrain upon which Guevara was operating and Guevara was not.

According to Salmon, the Bolivian President, Rene Barrientos, was of Indian heritage and had the support of the populace. Since 1962, President Barrientos had conducted a domestic political campaign aimed at winning the support of the majority of the Bolivian populace.<sup>201</sup> Guevara understood the strength of a movement brought to power through a popular vote when he wrote:

Where a government has come into power through some form of popular vote, fraudulent or not, and maintains at least an appearance of constitutional legality, the guerilla outbreak cannot be promoted, since the possibilities of peaceful struggle have not yet been exhausted.<sup>202</sup>

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<sup>200</sup> Salmon, *Defeat of Che Guevara*, 25.

<sup>201</sup> Salmon, *Defeat of Che Guevara*, 45.

<sup>202</sup> Ernesto Guevara, *Guerrilla Warfare* (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), 8.



Yet Guevara failed to heed his own advice and expected the local populace would not support the authority. As an outsider the local populace was most likely to support their Bolivian government and military over Guevara's insurgent force.

***d. Geographic Conditions***

Bolivia was a poor country that is strategically located in South America. Bolivia shares long and poorly secured borders with five other South American Countries: Brazil, Paraguay, Argentina, Chile, and Peru. The geographical area affected by Guevara's focus and counterinsurgent forces was relatively small. The prerequisite for a successful insurgency, geographic conditions, was a significant disadvantage for the insurgency from the start. The terrain was too rough for guerrilla warfare, and Guevara and his people were not familiar with the terrain, and worse the local authorities had a superior knowledge of the terrain.

***e. External Support***

The prerequisite for a successful insurgency, external support, was a significant disadvantage for the insurgency from the very start and only got worse. External support for Guevara's insurgent force could have come from primarily two sources; Cuba, and the Bolivian Communist Party. External support for Guevara's efforts in Bolivia was to be greatly affected by Cuba's dependence on Russia. The military historian Rooney observed that in July 1967, the Russian Prime Minister, Kosygin told Castro that "if Cuba did not withdraw support from Ché, the USSR would cease to support Cuba."<sup>203</sup> External support from the Bolivian Communist Party to fight an insurgency within their own country failed to materialize for several reasons. Frank Kitson argues that the BCP felt that Guevara had deceived them as to the true intention of his cause in Bolivia. Guevara demanded that he be in charge of the Bolivian forces, though he was an outsider. Guevara refused to acknowledge the Bolivian Communist Party because he intended to build a new party after victory, formed around his own *focos*.<sup>204</sup>

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<sup>203</sup> Rooney, *Guerrilla*, 218.

<sup>204</sup> Kitson, *Low Intensity Operations*, 42.

External support for the Bolivian government was also to prove detrimental to any chance of success that Guevara may have hoped for. The Bolivian government accepted U.S. support in the form of a sixteen-man team from the United States Special Forces. As discussed earlier this team was able to train and equip the 2<sup>nd</sup> Bolivian Ranger Battalion, which ultimately cornered, captured, and killed Guevara.

**f. Information Advantage**

The prerequisite for a successful insurgency, information advantage, was a significant disadvantage for the duration of Guevara's insurgency. This was due to primarily three factors: (1) a language barrier with the local Indians, (2) failure to win the support of the local populace, and (3) loss or failure of communications equipment.

The local Indians in Bolivia did not speak Spanish and Guevara and his people had learned the wrong Indian dialect. Unable to communicate effectively with the local Indians only increased their suspicion of this outside force.

Suspicious of Guevara's party, the local Indians in the province withheld information from the revolutionaries, and provided information to the Bolivian government. Informants were a key factor in identifying the supply caches that Guevara's insurgent force desperately needed. An informant was also responsible for the ultimate capture of Guevara. The location of Guevara's encampment in October 1967 was provided by an informant to the Bolivian Special Forces.

Guevara was unable to effectively communicate with his insurgent forces or with Havana. Communications were hampered by two critical factors: (1) that the two shortwave transmitters provided to him by Cuba were defective; and, that just months into the campaign in Bolivia the equipment used to decode messages from Havana was lost during a river crossing. There was a complete breakdown in communications capabilities both internally and externally.

**5. Conclusion**

Ernesto "Ché" Guevara's belief that a revolution did not need to wait for the right conditions was a fatal flaw in Bolivia. Ironically Guevara wrote in his book, *Guerrilla Warfare*, that

it must always be kept in mind that there is a necessary minimum without which the establishment and consolidation of the first center [Popular forces can win a war against the army.] is not practical.<sup>205</sup>

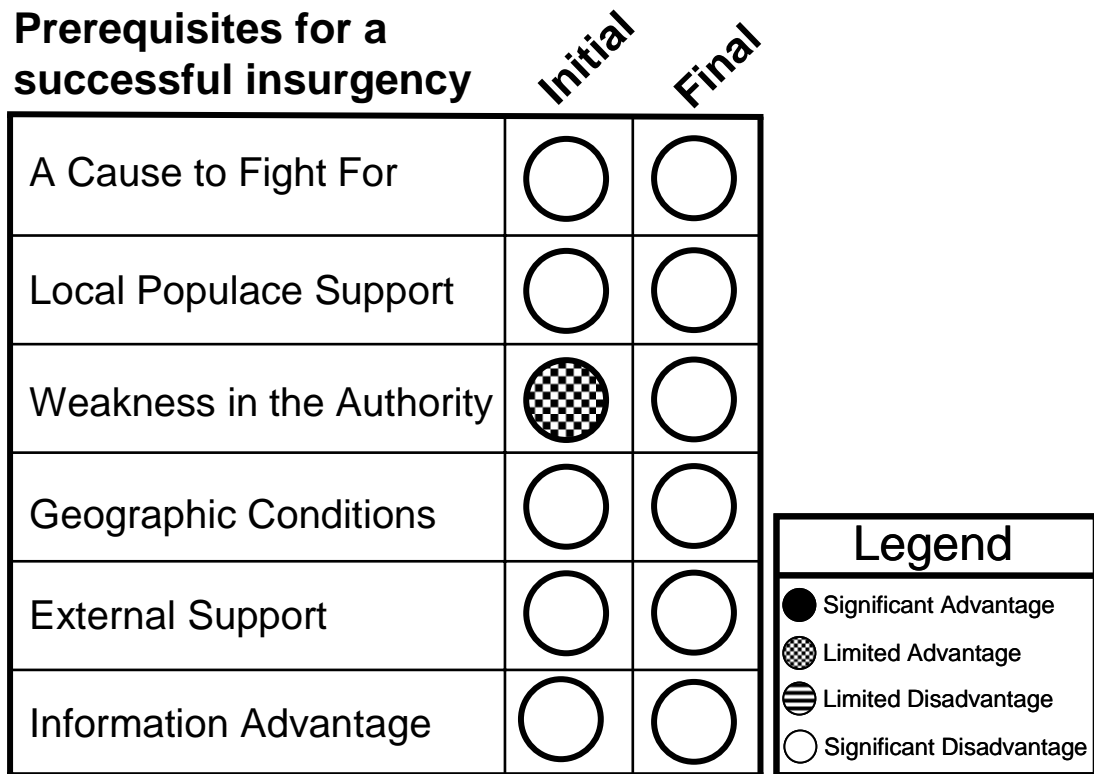
In hindsight it is obvious that Guevara had not correctly assessed either the current political or social situation in Bolivia. Though ruled by military dictators, the Bolivian people did not desire outsiders in their country to stir up revolution. Though circumstances many have been harsh in Bolivia, conditions were worse in neighboring countries, and the conditions for the Bolivian people had generally been improving under the current government. The scholar Henry B. Ryan keenly observed the critical fact that despite Bolivian fears, the United States did not Americanize the war.<sup>206</sup> The United States effectively followed established counterinsurgency tenets to enable the Bolivians to secure their own state.

In June 1967 the roughness of the terrain and lack of medicine and supplies resulted in Guevara becoming seriously ill. With a history of asthma it was predictable that the harsh conditions of the Bolivian Mountains would weaken Guevara's body and ultimately lead to the desperate search for medicine and supplies that would end with his capture in October 1967.

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<sup>205</sup> Guevara, *Guerrilla Warfare*, 7-8.

<sup>206</sup> Henry B. Ryan, *The Fall of Che Guevara* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 9.



**Figure 23. Bolivia (1966-1968) Prerequisites for a Successful Insurgency Chart**

Using a Likert scale to examine the Ernesto Guevara's insurgency in Bolivia against the prerequisites for a successful insurgency, it is observed that the Guevara had a significant disadvantage in all prerequisites except the prerequisite weakness in the authority from the very beginning and things only got worse.

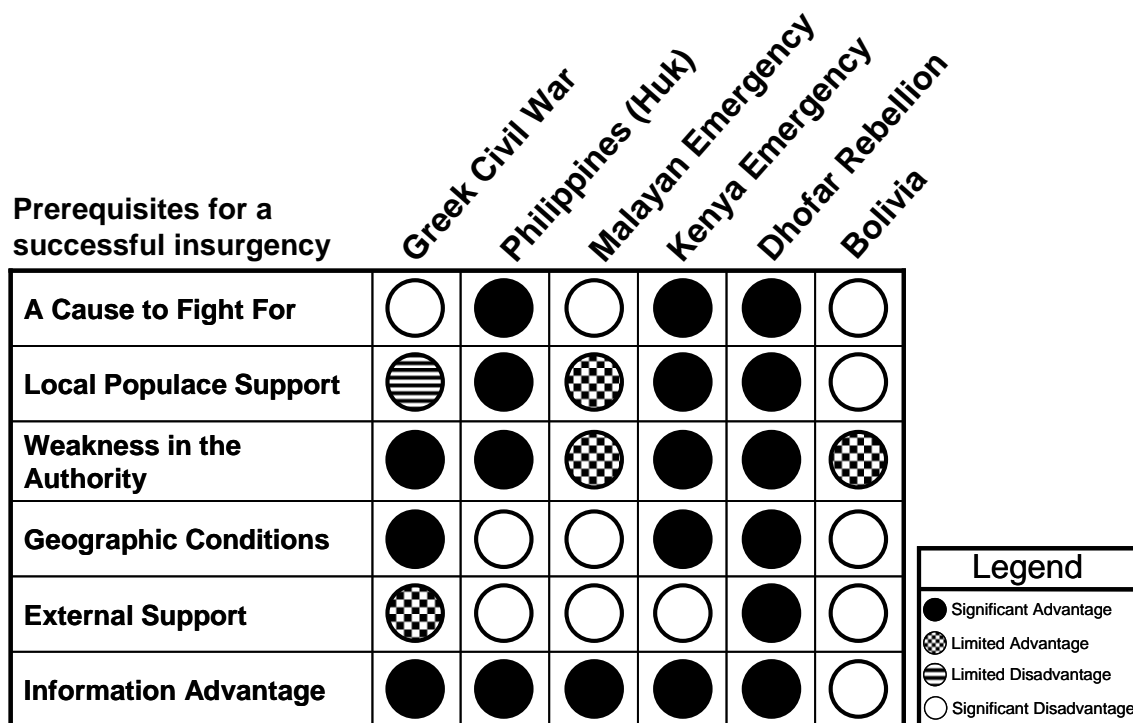


Figure 24. Initial Consolidated Prerequisites for a Successful Insurgency Chart

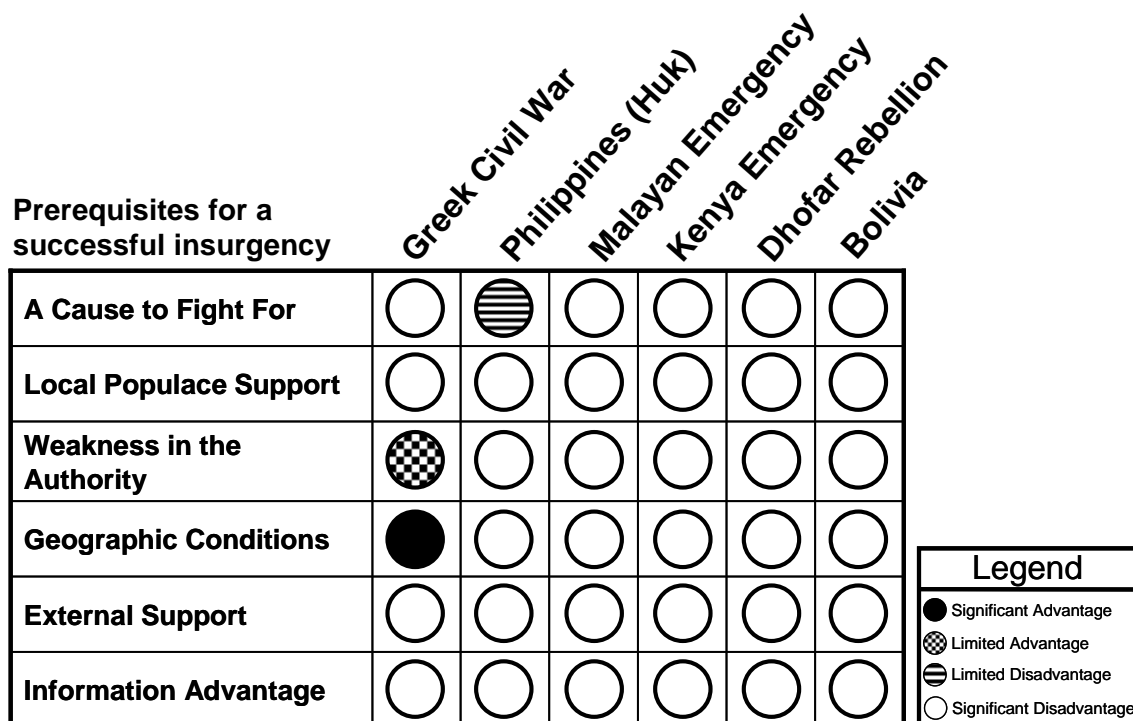


Figure 25. Final Consolidated Prerequisites for a Successful Insurgency Chart

## **V. ANALYSIS OF CASE STUDIES AND CONCLUSION**

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

This chapter is an analysis of the findings based on the completed case studies of six of the eleven identified post-World War II failed insurgencies in Chapter IV. The consolidated results are shown in the figures on the preceding page. The initial and final conditions of the insurgencies reference the six prerequisites for a successful insurgency: (1) a cause to fight for, (2) local populace support, (3) weakness in the authority, (4) favorable geographic conditions, (5) external support during the middle and later stages of an insurgency, and (6) an information advantage, are shown in figures 24 and 25. Each prerequisite for a successful insurgency is examined with a focus on identifying trends. Trends will then be examined in order to identify insurgent vulnerabilities for exploitation in future insurgencies. Though duration is not an identified prerequisite for a successful insurgency, it has been determined that this topic can have a great impact on the ultimate outcome of an insurgency. For this reason, this chapter will end with a discussion on the topic of duration.

### **B. A CAUSE TO FIGHT FOR**

Developing a viable cause that appeals to the populace is critical to an insurgency gaining the support of the populace. Three of six of the insurgencies did not effectively identify an existing issue and exploit it to create a cause that would appeal to the populace. In the Greek Civil War the leaders of the insurgency did not effectively identify an existing domestic issue and exploit it to create a cause that would appeal to the populace. Not only did the insurgents fail to identify any issue, their communist ideology conflicted with the Greek culture. Insurgent leaders during the Malayan Emergency attempted to develop a nationalist anti-British sentiment among the Malays, which was not there. What support the insurgents' cause gained was mitigated by the British and Malayan government when they effectively addressed the grievances of the Chinese minority, the segment of the populace that provided the insurgency's strongest

supporters. The cause, revolution throughout South America, which Ernesto Guevara developed for his Bolivian campaign, completely failed to appeal to the local Bolivian populace.

Three of the insurgencies did effectively identify an existing issue and exploit it to create a cause that would appeal to the local populace. These three insurgencies all had a significant advantage over the authority at the beginning of the insurgency, only to see this advantage taken away over time by effective counterinsurgent policies and actions. The Huk movement identified the issues of land reform and government corruption in order to create a cause that appealed to the populace. It is important to note that the land issue was more or less limited to the rural populace of Central Luzon, while the issue of government corruption had a wider appeal encompassing both the rural and urban populaces. Both of these causes were greatly weakened by aggressive economic, political, social and military reforms by the Philippine government. The insurgents during the Kenya Emergency developed an effective cause from the existing land issue that when combined with the process of “oathing” proved very effective. The colonial government was able to undermine the insurgents’ cause by aggressive economic, political, and social reforms. The insurgents during the Dhofar Rebellion were able to effectively exploit the existing issue of the harsh treatment of the Dhofari populace by the Sultan to create a credible cause. Replacing the Sultan and utilizing the oil revenues of Oman, the Sultan’s son, Qaboos, developed an aggressive program of civil projects which the insurgents were unable to overcome. Over time, as conditions in Dhofar improved under the new leadership of Qaboos, local populace support for the insurgents’ cause diminished.

It is believed that a successful insurgency must have an issue that can be effectively exploited to create a cause. This issue does not have to be real; the populace must only perceive that the issue is real. It is not military force which will mitigate an effective insurgent cause. If an insurgency fails from the beginning to find issues that can be effectively exploited to create a popular cause, the authority must take care not to develop policies or take actions that might give the insurgency a cause. By identifying the

issues upon which an insurgent movement's cause depends, the authority can then develop policies that will undermine the appeal of the insurgent cause to the local populace.

### **C. LOCAL POPULACE SUPPORT**

The fight to control the populace is a primary characteristic of an insurgency. Success of both insurgent and counterinsurgent forces largely depends on their ability to win the local populace's support for their respective causes. Three of the insurgencies (Huk Rebellion, Kenya Emergency, Dhofar Rebellion) initially had a significant advantage in the prerequisite of local populace support. One insurgency (Malayan Emergency) initially had a limited advantage. The Greek Civil War had a limited disadvantage, and Guevara's insurgency had a significant disadvantage.

The strong appeal of the Huk movement's cause gave the insurgency a significant advantage in this prerequisite. Significant improvement in the authority, combined with an increase in senseless violence by insurgents in order to coerce the populace, resulted in this prerequisite becoming a significant disadvantage for the insurgency. The Mau Mau initially had a significant advantage in this prerequisite during the Kenya Emergency, primarily due to the appeal of their cause, oath-taking, and counter-productive counterinsurgency operations by the authority. By 1954, this prerequisite had become a significant disadvantage for the Mau Mau primarily due to their increased use of terrorism to coerce the populace and the authority's successful Operation Anvil. Initially during the Dhofar Rebellion, the insurgents had a significant advantage in this prerequisite due mostly to tribal ties and the extreme maltreatment of the Dhofari populace by the authority. A change in leadership within the authority, and the development and implementation of an effective counterinsurgency campaign that focused on improving the lives of the Dhofari populace, resulted in this prerequisite becoming a significant disadvantage for the insurgency. The insurgency during the Malayan Emergency initially had a limited advantage in the prerequisite for a successful insurgency, local populace support, mainly due to their ability to return to the organization that they had developed during the Japanese occupation and the accessibility



of the Chinese squatter populace. This prerequisite had become a significant disadvantage for the insurgent movement by 1955, in large part due to the authority's implementation of the Briggs Plan.

The Greek communist insurgent movement initially had a limited disadvantage in this prerequisite because of their alienation of the Greek populace. The populace was alienated because the insurgency's cause did not appeal to them. The harsh treatment of hostages following the insurgent's loss in the second round met with widespread disapproval in Greece. An increased use of terror to coerce the local populace resulted in this prerequisite becoming a significant disadvantage for the insurgency. Guevara had a significant disadvantage in this prerequisite throughout his short campaign because there was a lack of a credible cause and an inability to communicate due to a language barrier.

The authorities during the Malayan Emergency, Kenya Emergency, and Huk Rebellion, utilized some form of pseudo teams as part of their counterinsurgency campaign. Pseudo gangs operate most efficiently when the insurgent command and communications systems are weak. Pseudo gangs can provide human intelligence and other support operations to the authority. When an authority utilizes pseudo gangs as human intelligence collectors, care must be taken to avoid becoming involved in human rights violations. The authority must establish an effective system of incentives for a sufficient number of insurgents to defect. Once an insurgent has defected to the authority it is very unlikely that the insurgent will defect back to the insurgents. The scholar Lawrence E. Cline argues that if the insurgent admitted to defecting to the authority, it is very likely that the insurgents would kill such an individual.<sup>207</sup>

Resettlement of large segments of the populace was part of the authority's counterinsurgency strategy during the Greek Civil War, Huk Rebellion, Malayan Emergency, Kenya Emergency, and Dhofar Rebellion. The process of resettlement, often combined with relocation, can have a serious detrimental impact on the insurgents' ability to control the populace. Historian Andrew Krepinevich argues that "the support of the people is a measure of the insurgents' ability to control the people, whether through

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<sup>207</sup> Lawrence E. Cline, *Pseudo Operations and Counterinsurgency: Lessons from Other Countries*, U.S. Army War College Strategic Studies Institute. Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania 17013. June 2005.

their willing cooperation or as the result of threats, acts of terrorism, or the physical occupation of their community.”<sup>208</sup> When planning operations, insurgent organizations must determine what effect they intend to achieve reference the populace. It is most likely that the insurgents have better knowledge of the target populace and social spheres of influence. With this knowledge, the insurgent planners can better identify a realistic level of effect for their campaigns. The insurgent planners can then create objectives with reasonable measures of effectiveness that support the insurgency’s overall campaign plan. Support from the populace is crucial for effective counterinsurgent intelligence. Finally the counterinsurgency expert Galula argues that “If it is possible to destroy the insurgent political organization by intensive police action, it is impossible to prevent the return of the guerilla units and the rebuilding of the political cells unless the population cooperates.”<sup>209</sup>

#### **D. WEAKNESS IN THE AUTHORITY**

Is the authority unable to prevent insurgent operations? Four of the insurgencies (Greek Civil War, Huk Rebellion, Kenya Emergency, Dhofar Rebellion) initially had a significant advantage and two of the insurgencies (Malayan Emergency, Bolivia) had a limited advantage in the prerequisite weakness in the authority. By the final stage of all of the insurgencies this prerequisite was a significant disadvantage.

The insurgents in the Greek Civil War had a significant advantage in this prerequisite due to the disorganization and incompetence of both the government and the military. British and American external support in the form of advisors, material, and financing decreased this prerequisite to a limited advantage by the end of the war. The Huk movement had a significant advantage in this prerequisite until an effective leader took control of the authority’s counterinsurgency campaign. Magsaysay’s positive influence on the government proved insurmountable for the Huk movement and this prerequisite became a significant disadvantage as the authority strengthened. The Mau Mau initially had a significant advantage in this prerequisite. Though the colonial government of Kenya was confronted with intelligence that the threat posed by the Mau

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<sup>208</sup> Andrew Krepinevich, *The Army and Vietnam* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins Press, 1988), 9.

<sup>209</sup> Galula, *Counter-Insurgency Warfare*, 75.

Mau movement was great, the governor chose not to act. This enabled the Mau Mau to maintain the initiative and grow in strength until the authority brought in new leaders. These new leaders were able over time to reduce this prerequisite to a significant disadvantage for the insurgency. The oppressive and harsh actions of the Sultan during the initial stages of the Dhofar Rebellion served to strengthen the insurgency and weaken the authority. The initial significant advantage that the insurgents maintained was reduced to a significant disadvantage mainly due to a leadership change. The Sultan was replaced by his son, Qaboos, who requested the external support of the British and with their assistance developed an effective counterinsurgency campaign using all the resources at his disposal.

The insurgents during the Malayan Emergency initially had a limited advantage in this prerequisite primarily due to the authority's disorganization and the British forces' decision to fight the insurgency conventionally. Successful implementation of the Briggs Plan and Templar's White Areas by the authority reduced this prerequisite to a significant disadvantage. Guevara's insurgent forces initially had a limited advantage in this prerequisite. This limited advantage was short lived. Though the Bolivian authority was inefficient and unprepared to fight an insurgency, the discovery that Guevara was in Bolivia was enough to get the authority to focus their overwhelming resources. Guevara's evaluation that he could gain an advantage over the authority in this case was incorrect mainly due to his poor analysis of the Bolivian government and the populace's level of support for the government.

Maintaining an advantage in this prerequisite enables an insurgency to more readily maintain the initiative. The recent U.S. Army counterinsurgency manual points out that "Insurgents succeed by sowing chaos and disorder anywhere; the government fails unless it maintains a degree of order everywhere."<sup>210</sup> Leadership changes in the authority proved critical in eventually establishing an advantage over the insurgency in this prerequisite in the Philippines' Huk Rebellion, Malayan Emergency, Kenya Emergency, and the Dhofar Rebellion. These leadership changes enabled the

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<sup>210</sup> U. S. Depart. of the Army, *FM 3-24, Counterinsurgency*, 1-2.

development of counterinsurgency campaigns that strengthened the authority and were able to prevent their respective insurgencies from sowing chaos and disorder.

#### **E. GEOGRAPHIC CONDITIONS**

An insurgent movement with its initial weakness is most likely to fail if it cannot get any help from the geography. Three of the insurgencies did initially have a significant advantage in geographic conditions. The insurgent movement in the Greek Civil War had a significant advantage in this prerequisite throughout the insurgency due to international borders and mountainous terrain. The insurgents were able to move freely across the Yugoslavian border until the third round and the Albanian and Bulgarian borders until the end of the war. This enabled the insurgent movement to establish sanctuaries outside of Greece, from which they could resupply, rearm, recruit, train, plan, and rest. The insurgents failed to take advantage of the terrain when they attempted in the third round to retain terrain against the authority's numerically superior forces. In the Kenya Emergency the Mau Mau movement initially had a significant advantage due to geographic conditions, but this advantage became a significant disadvantage as the authority focused both their political and military efforts on the small in-land area that the Mau Mau were isolated in by mid-1955. The authority was able to mitigate the insurgents' initial advantage in knowledge of the terrain through effective training and more importantly the creation of pseudo-gangs from ex-Mau Mau members. The insurgent movement during the Dhofar Rebellion initially had a significant advantage in geographic conditions. The Jebel Akhdar from which the insurgents primarily operated was a natural fortress. The state bordering the Dhofar province, the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, offered sanctuary for the insurgents. The authority was able to make geographic conditions a significant disadvantage for the insurgents by constructing the Hornbeam Line and accelerating counterinsurgent operations to isolate the insurgents and effectively cut their supply lines to insurgents in central and eastern Dhofar.

Three of the insurgencies had a significant disadvantage in geographic conditions throughout the insurgency. The geographic conditions of Central Luzon were a significant disadvantage for the insurgent movement throughout the Huk Rebellion. Geographic conditions created vulnerabilities in the communications and resupply

systems that the insurgency depended upon. The insurgents during the Malayan Emergency were faced with a significant disadvantage due to the geographic conditions of Malaya. Though the abundance of mountainous and jungle covered terrain are desirable geographic conditions for an insurgency, the insurgency was at a distinct disadvantage for several reasons. Surrounded by water on three sides and the unfriendly Thailand border to the north, the insurgency was effectively isolated, thus complicating and/or limiting external support. Geographic conditions were a significant disadvantage throughout Guevara's Bolivian campaign. The terrain was too rough, the insurgents were not familiar with the terrain, and worse the local authorities had a superior knowledge of the terrain.

Authorities that develop counterinsurgency campaigns that take into account mitigating an insurgent force's advantage in terrain can take this advantage away from the insurgents over time. The authority must be creative in dealing with geographic conditions. The Hornbeam Line and pseudo-gangs are two examples of how creative counterinsurgent leaders can mitigate an insurgent movement's geographic advantage.

#### **F. EXTERNAL SUPPORT**

Though external support is not required during the initial stage of an insurgency, it is critical during the middle and later stages. Insurgencies that have external support in the initial stages will most likely grow more rapidly than those without. Initially only the insurgents in Dhofar had a significant advantage and the insurgents in the Greek Civil War had a limited advantage. With external support not a requirement in the initial stage of an insurgency it is not surprising that four of the insurgencies initially had a significant disadvantage.

The insurgents during the Dhofar Rebellion at first received significant support from the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen in the form of sanctuary and at one point direct military support in the form of four companies of PDRY regular army soldiers. Varying degrees of external support were also provided by Iraq, Saudi Arabia, China, Libya, Soviet Union, and Cuba. The insurgent movement during the Greek Civil War had an initial limited advantage in external support, primarily due to the ability to

develop sanctuaries in bordering states. The insurgents also failed to understand the Soviet Union's position on their conflict.

The insurgent movement during the Huk Rebellion was at a significant disadvantage in external support through out the insurgency. The Chinese did provide printed propaganda and an extremely limited financial contribution through the Chinese Communist Party in the Philippines. As the authority grew in strength this lack of external support became more acute. Unable to expand the conflict out of Central Luzon, the insurgency was also unable to effectively receive external support due to a lack of a port. External support was a significant disadvantage for the insurgency through out the Malayan and Kenya Emergency. Both insurgencies were unable to use international borders to gain an advantage over the authority. Both insurgencies also received very little to no external support. External support for Guevara's doomed Bolivian campaign was initially a significant disadvantage from the beginning and only got worse. Even if Cuba had wanted to provide external support to Guevara's insurgent forces, the geographic conditions and the Bolivian authority would have prevented it.

When studying an insurgency, an authority should seek to accurately determine the level of reliance that an insurgent movement has on external support. Insurgent leaders will seek to solidify as much external support as possible during the initial phase of an insurgency. If an insurgency starts with a disadvantage in external support, insurgent leaders will most likely expend as much effort and resources as required to gain external support – political and material. The authority can use military means in an effort to impede supply lines and restrict cross border movement to sanctuaries to a limited degree. An effective counterinsurgency campaign should prioritize diplomatic efforts to limit external support to an insurgency, with military forces in a supporting role.

## **G. INFORMATION ADVANTAGE**

Insurgents must shape the information environment in order to succeed. Insurgencies by their very nature begin with an information advantage over the authority. Many argue that if there is not an information advantage then there is not an insurgency. Five of the insurgencies initially had a significant advantage in the prerequisite

information advantage. One, Guevara's Bolivian insurgent campaign, had a significant disadvantage through out the short duration of the conflict.

Initially this prerequisite was a significant advantage for the Greek communists. The authority executed a relocation program that effectively separated the communists from the Greek populace. This resulted in a significant loss of intelligence for the Greek communists. This loss of intelligence was great enough over time to reduce this prerequisite to a significant disadvantage by the middle of the third round. The prerequisite, information advantage, was a significant advantage for the Huk movement until the 18 October 1950 capture of the entire Politburo operating inside Manila. The capture of this cell, with a significant amount of personnel and organizational information, also resulted in a significant loss of morale within the Huk movement. More importantly the Huk movement lost their significant advantage in information in Central Luzon with the authority's identification of the vulnerability of the insurgents' courier system of communications. With the resultant loss of the initiative, this prerequisite became a significant disadvantage for the Huk movement. The insurgents during the Malayan Emergency initially had a significant advantage in this prerequisite, because they started with well established communication networks that they had developed during the Japanese occupation. By 1955, this prerequisite became a significant disadvantage for the insurgency due to the authority's successful implementation of the Briggs Plan and the resettlement of the Chinese squatters. The insurgents' loss of the information advantage deprived the communists of the ability to retain the initiative. The insurgency during the Kenya Emergency initially had a significant advantage in this prerequisite. The authority failed to act on the limited intelligence that was available on the Mau Mau movement. The Mau Mau were able to strongly establish an effective psychological campaign that utilized "oathing" to control the populace and recruit. The insurgents did nothing to impede the information capabilities of the authority. Language was also an advantage for the insurgents initially. This barrier was not overcome until pseudo gangs were established. Information obtained from the Home Guard, pseudo gangs, and the capture of Waruhiu Itote, General China, resulted in a decisive shift in the information advantage from the Mau Mau to the authority. By mid-1954, this prerequisite

was a significant disadvantage for the Mau Mau. This prerequisite was a significant disadvantage for the duration of Guevara's Bolivian campaign due to a language barrier with the local Indians, a failure to win the support of the local populace, and the loss or failure of their communications equipment.

The evidence suggests that though an insurgency may start with an information advantage it does not guarantee success. An authority that understands that information is the most important aspect of an effective counterinsurgency campaign will be able to take the information advantage away from the insurgency over time. The loss of an information advantage means that the insurgency will also lose the initiative. Without the initiative the insurgency will become reactive to counterinsurgent activities and more focused on survival.

The authority's counterinsurgency resettlement strategy during the Greek Civil War, Huk Rebellion, Malayan Emergency, Kenya Emergency, and Dhofar Rebellion enabled the separation of the populace from the insurgency. This separation deprived the insurgency of critical information and enabled the authority to gain an information advantage.

The authorities utilized some form of pseudo gangs during the Malayan Emergency, Kenya Emergency, and Huk Rebellion, as part of their counterinsurgency campaign. Pseudo gangs were critical as human intelligence collectors. The collection of this intelligence when combined with supporting exploitation operations by the authority can severely degrade the insurgent movement's command and communications systems.

The capture of key insurgent personnel during the Huk Rebellion and the Kenya Emergency facilitated a shift in the information advantage from the insurgency to the authority. The resultant loss of the initiative created a secondary effect of decreased morale amongst the insurgent movement.

The evidence suggests that in order to take the information advantage away from an insurgency the authority should develop a counterinsurgency campaign plan that incorporates a resettlement strategy, the development of pseudo gangs, and targets key insurgent leaders for capture.



## **H. A DISCUSSION ON THE TOPIC OF TIME AND THE DURATION OF AN INSURGENCY**

One can strongly argue that time is on the side of the insurgent and effects most of the prerequisites for a successful insurgency. Counterinsurgent forces must completely defeat an insurgent force in order to win. This takes time; insurgencies are typically long wars, with Ché Guevara's failed insurgency in Bolivia being an extremely rare exception. On the other hand, insurgents do not have to completely defeat the authority or counterinsurgent forces; they have to merely survive. In the words of the former National Security Advisor and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, "the basic equation of guerrilla war is as simple as it is difficult to execute: the guerrilla army wins as long as it can keep from losing; the conventional army is bound to lose unless it wins decisively."<sup>211</sup>

The duration of an insurgency is often difficult to measure precisely in comparison to a conventional conflict due to the lack of an official declaration of war from one or both belligerents and the lack of a treaty often obscures the end of the conflict. Kissinger argues that a stalemate almost never occurs; an authority fighting an insurgency must be prepared for a long struggle. A clear-cut victory for counterinsurgent forces is very rare; failed insurgencies tend to diminish over a long period of time and eventually fade away.<sup>212</sup> Leaders of insurgencies, in the words of the scholar Robert R. Leonard, understand that "wars that last longer than expected challenge constitutions, destroy domestic harmony, and cause governments to fall."<sup>213</sup> For these reasons, leaders of the authority, especially democracies, desire conflicts to be of short duration.

Though time or duration is not identified as a prerequisite for a successful insurgency, it must be seriously considered by both the authority and counterinsurgent forces' campaign planners. The strategic effects of time on the authority and counterinsurgent forces must be a factor when developing counterinsurgency campaign plans. Examining the six prerequisites for a successful insurgency we see that time is a factor that generally works in the favor of the insurgents.

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<sup>211</sup> Henry Kissinger, *Diplomacy* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994), 629.

<sup>212</sup> Kissinger, *Diplomacy*, 629.

<sup>213</sup> Robert R. Leonard, *Fighting by Minutes: Time and the Art of War* (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, 1994), 53.

Examining the prerequisite “a cause to fight for” it is argued that time enables insurgents to identify an issue and develop it into a cause that is both lasting and appealing to the insurgents. Time also enables the insurgent movement to become well established around this cause. Time enables the insurgents to raise the political consciousness of the populace reference the issue they desire to make their cause. Time enables insurgent leaders to groom a worthwhile cause that is credible to both the populace and insurgents.

The duration of an insurgency affects the prerequisite “local populace support.” Time enables the insurgents to set the conditions necessary to first control the populace and then win over their support. Leonhard argues that the populaces of Western societies demand that wars be short in duration and decisive. The desire for the duration of future conflicts to be of short duration is complicated by several factors. The first factor is the ability of the authority and counterinsurgent forces to meet the security expectations of the populace is complicated by the fact that insurgencies will develop at varying speeds in different locations. The second factor is the number of participants in the insurgency. The greater the number of participants the longer the insurgency tends to be. And finally, the third factor is that errors in judgment of either or both the authority and insurgency will cause the insurgency to last longer.<sup>214</sup>

Examining the prerequisite “weakness in the authority” it is argued that time generally favors the insurgent. Andrew Krepinevich argues that time allows the insurgent to develop a strong organization and consolidate his base of power. Furthermore the longer the duration of an insurgency the more likely there will be errors in judgment by the authority. These errors in judgment are usually due to the authority’s increasing sense of futility and frustration as they try to meet their populace’s expectation of a short and decisive conflict. In an effort to meet this expectation the authority will usually take shortcuts in an effort to defeat an insurgency.<sup>215</sup> With time the insurgency has an increased likelihood of infiltrating the authority, especially its security forces.

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<sup>214</sup> Leonhard, *Fighting by Minutes*, 54, 63.

<sup>215</sup> Krepinevich, *The Army and Vietnam*, 8.

Time affects the prerequisite “geographic conditions.” Time enables insurgents to better utilize geographic conditions to their advantage. Given time insurgents will establish numerous sanctuaries in order to train, plan, and re-equip. Time also enables insurgents to establish numerous and well dispersed bases. Sanctuaries and numerous and well dispersed insurgent bases severely complicate counterinsurgency planning.

Examining the prerequisite “external support” it is apparent that time or duration is a critical factor in the level of external support that insurgent leaders can develop. External support to an insurgency in the form of political support requires time. An insurgency must survive as diplomatic pressure is applied on the authority and counterinsurgent forces in the international arena. It also takes time for the insurgency to develop the organizational structure necessary to effectively absorb significant amounts external support.

Time favors the insurgent when considering the prerequisite “information advantage.” Time enables the insurgents to shape the information environment to their advantage. The longer the duration of an insurgency the greater the opportunity of the insurgents to exploit local incidents involving the authority or counterinsurgent forces.

Though time or duration generally favors the insurgent, there are some dangers that insurgent leaders must also overcome when considering the six prerequisites for a successful insurgency reference time. Given too much time an authority may be able to set the conditions that mitigate the cause upon which an insurgency is based. When considering the prerequisite “information advantage” time could be a severe disadvantage if the authority is able to win enough populace support to gain an advantage in intelligence over the insurgents. Insurgent leaders may also have to deal with the impatience of their own leaders to defeat the authority. The Greek communist insurgents provide an example of how the impatience of insurgent leaders can lead to defeat. The KKE failed to heed Moscow’s advice, prior to the second round, that the struggle not be expanded. The KKE did not exploit time by keeping their true intentions hidden until appropriate strength and conditions could be established for a successful insurgency. By revealing their intentions and attacking too soon the KKE was forced into a race against time. With their intentions revealed, the Greek government was able to secure aid from

both the British and Americans. In the end the KKE was unable to take over before assistance provided to the Greek government became too great. Finally as time passes there is a greater likelihood that the leadership of the insurgency may splinter.

Leonhard argues “that generally, the stronger side in a war seeks to shorten the duration of the conflict, while the weaker side generally tries to lengthen it in order to increase the opportunities for a favorable outcome.”<sup>216</sup> With this in mind it is posited that successful insurgencies will manipulate the duration of the conflict to their advantage.

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<sup>216</sup> Leonhard, *Fighting by Minutes*, 55.

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## **VI. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE COUNTERINSURGENCY OPERATIONS**

This final chapter contains a conclusion and discussion on the implications of the findings in the preceding chapters of this thesis on future counterinsurgency operations.

### **A. CONCLUSION**

The six primary prerequisites for a successful insurgency are

- A cause to fight for.
- Local populace support.
- Weakness in the authority.
- Geographic conditions.
- External support.
- Information advantage.

The evidence indicates that there is no silver bullet for defeating an insurgency. No one prerequisite for a successful insurgency stands out as the key to defeating insurgencies. Individual prerequisites for a successful insurgency can not be isolated and focused on as the solution for defeating an insurgency. Counterinsurgency campaign planners must consider and take into account all of the prerequisites and plan accordingly.

The historical analysis of the six failed insurgencies indicates that there are three common characteristics that could potentially be exploited to promote failure in an insurgency. For all six of the insurgencies analyzed three of the prerequisites: local populace support, external support, and information advantage, were a significant disadvantage at the end of the conflict. This trend would seem to indicate that these three prerequisites at a minimum must be reduced to a significant disadvantage in order to defeat an insurgency.

The authority does not have to have a significant advantage in all of the prerequisites in order to defeat an insurgency. The authority did have a significant

advantage in all of the prerequisites in four of the failed insurgencies, but in two of the insurgencies the authority won without degrading all the prerequisites to a level of significant disadvantage for the insurgency. In the Greek Civil War, the insurgency still had a limited advantage in the prerequisite, weakness in authority, and a significant advantage in the prerequisite, geographic conditions, at the end of the conflict. In the Huk Rebellion the insurgency only had a limited disadvantage in the prerequisite, a cause to fight for, at the end of the conflict.

The Dhofar Rebellion demonstrated that though an insurgency may initially have a significant advantage in all of the prerequisites for a successful insurgency it does not guarantee victory over the authority. The Mau Mau movement started with a significant advantage in all the prerequisites for a successful insurgency, except external support, and they also failed to defeat the authority.

In conclusion, this research indicates that defeating an insurgency is a very complex problem which cannot be solved solely with military means. The authority must have leaders that can look at all six prerequisites for a successful insurgency and develop an effective counterinsurgency campaign that utilizes all the capabilities of the authority. Over-reliance on military force to defeat an insurgency will at best just prolong the conflict until the authority changes strategy, or at worst lead to the defeat of the authority.

## **B. IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE COUNTERINSURGENCY OPERATIONS**

Historical analysis of the selected six failed insurgencies reveals that no one best counterinsurgency strategy can be applied to all insurgencies. Though one can frame future insurgencies using the six prerequisites for a successful insurgency, each insurgency is unique and must be fought differently. Counterinsurgent campaign planners must be able to identify and understand future conflicts involving insurgencies. Both the authority and counterinsurgent forces must also develop a degree of flexibility in dealing with an insurgency that is uncommon in current conventional forces. Nowhere is this need for flexibility more evident than when examining the prerequisite “information advantage.”

Modern insurgent leaders have realized that the true battle is not fought in the physical domain, but in the cognitive domain. The capability of modern insurgent leaders to mount sophisticated information operations must be seriously considered by counterinsurgent campaign planners. The use of information, mainly through the media, propaganda, and disinformation may be more powerful than a division or corps of conventional troops. Insurgents have taken advantage of the fact that the “24/7” electronic global media, challenged to fill airtime, is most times repetitive and shallow in their analysis. The fact that this “24/7” electronic global media enables insurgents to reach portions of their respective populace or external supporters and rapidly inspire violent responses<sup>217</sup> provides a distinct advantage to the insurgent reference the prerequisite for a successful insurgency, information advantage. Strategies involving historically effective counterinsurgency strategies such as mass resettlement and pseudo gangs may no longer be politically possible because of the “24/7” electronic global media and the ability of insurgents to utilize it to their benefit.

Finally, the protracted nature of insurgencies makes it critical to both insurgent and counterinsurgent forces to maintain the determination and will to succeed. The “24/7” electronic global media only exacerbates the already, in the counterinsurgency expert John Nagl’s own words, “impatient national character”<sup>218</sup> of the United States and the transparency required by a democracy. Cunning insurgent leaders will effectively use both of these to weaken the United States populace’s determination and will to succeed. United States’ counterinsurgency operations must keep this from happening.

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<sup>217</sup> Sloggett, “Information Operations,” 18-20.

<sup>218</sup> Nagl, *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife*, 51.



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## APPENDIX A – POST-WORLD WAR II INSURGENCIES<sup>219</sup>

✦ Palestine	1945-1948	Britain versus Jewish separatists
✦ Greek Civil War	1945-1949	Britain, then U.S. and the Government of Greece, versus National Liberation Army
✦ Indonesia Revolt	1945-1949	Netherlands versus Indonesian rebels
✦ French Indochina	1945-1954	France versus Viet Minh
✦ Kurd guerillas	1945-present	Kurds versus Turkey, Iran, Iraq, Russia
✦ Philippines (Hukbalahap Rebellion)	1946-1954	Philippine Islands versus Hukbalahap
✦ Madagascar	1947-1948	France versus Mouvement Democratique de la Renovation Malagache (MDRM)
✦ Jammu-Kashmir	1947-1949	Jammu and Kashmir with India versus insurgents and Pakistan
✦ Burma	1947-1960	Burma government versus communist insurgent groups
✦ Malayan Emergency	1948-1960	Britain versus Malayan Communist Party and Malayan Races Liberation Army
✦ Kenya Emergency	1952-1960	Britain versus Mau Mau
✦ Tibet	1952-present	China versus Tibet
✦ Cyprus	1954-1959	Britain versus Ethniki Organosis Kyprios Agoniston (EOKA)
✦ Algerian Revolt	1954-1962	France versus National Liberation Front (FLN)
✦ Oman	1955-1959	Jebel Akhdar and Britain Versus Talib
✦ Cameroon	1955-1962	French Cameroon versus Union des Populationsdu Cameroon (UPC)
✦ Aden Emergency	1955-1967	Britain and Aden versus Yemeni insurgents
✦ Sudan (First Sudan War)	1955-1972	Sudan versus Southern Sudan Liberation Movement (SSLM)
✦ Cuban Revolution	1956-1959	Cuba's Batista regime versus Castro
✦ Lebanon	1958	Lebanon versus United National Front (UNF)
✦ France	1958-1962	France versus Secret Army

<sup>219</sup> Though this list of Post WWII insurgencies was compiled from numerous sources, the core of information was gathered primarily from the following sources: Anthony J. Joes, *Guerilla Warfare: A Historical, Biographical, and Bibliographical Sourcebook*, Westport: Greenwood Press, 1996; Kalev I. Sepp, "Best Practices in Counterinsurgency," *Military Review*, 85, no. 3 (May-June 2005): 8-12.



✦ Venezuela	1958-1963	Organization (OAS) Venezuela versus urban-based Armed Forces for National Liberation (FALN)
✦ Haiti	1958-1964	Haiti versus Les Forces Armees Revolutionnaires Haitiennes (FARH), and several other insurgent groups
✦ Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia	1958-1975	U.S. and Government of Vietnam (GoVN) versus National Liberation Front (NLF) and Democratic People's Republic of Vietnam (DPRVN)
✦ Laos (Pathet Lao Campaign)	1959-1962 <sup>220</sup>	Laos versus Pathet Lao
✦ Guinea-Bissau (Potuguese Guinea)	1959-1974	Portugal versus African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC)
✦ Venezuela	1961-1969	Venezuela versus Armed Forces of National Liberation (FALN) and Cuba-assisted guerillas
✦ Angola	1961-1974	Portugal versus Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA)
✦ Eritrea	1961-1993	Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF) then in 1973 the Eritrean People's Liberation Forces (EPLF)
✦ Guatemala	1961-1996	Guatemala versus Rebel Armed Forces (FAR), Guerilla Army of the Poor (EPG), Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity (URNG)
✦ Mozambique	1962-1975	Portugal versus Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO)
✦ Dhofar	1962-1976	Oman and Britain versus Dhofar Liberation Front (DLF), renamed later the Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman and the Arab Gulf (PFLOAG)
✦ Uruguay	1963-1972	Uruguay versus Tupamaros
✦ Rhodesia	1963-1979	Rhodesia versus Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) and Zimbabwe African National Union (ZAPU)

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<sup>220</sup> Souphanouvong, founder of the Pathet Lao movement, actually had three insurgency cycles: 1945-1946, 1948-1954, and finally 1959-1962.

✦ Colombia	1964-present	U.S. and Government of Columbia versus Revolutionary Armed Forces of Columbia (FARC) and National Liberation Army (ELN)
✦ Chad	1965-1976	Chad versus Liberation Front of Chad (Front de Libération du Tchad or FLT)
✦ Thailand	1965-present	Thailand versus Pattani insurgents
✦ Bolivia	1966-1968	Bolivia versus Ché Guevara
✦ India	1967-1972	India versus Naxalites
✦ Spain	1968-present	Spain versus Basque Euzkadi Ta Askatasuna (ETA)
✦ Philippines	1968-present	Philippine Government versus New People's Army (NPA)
✦ United States	1969-1976	U.S. government versus Weather Underground
✦ Northern Ireland	1969-present	Britain versus Irish Republican Army (IRA)
✦ United States	1969-present	U.S. government versus MEChA's "Brown berets" (Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán)
✦ Germany	1970-1972	Germany versus Baader-Meinhof/Red Army Faction
✦ Philippines	1970-present	Philippine Government versus Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF)/Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF)
✦ United States	1971-1981	U.S. government versus Black Liberation Army (BLA)
✦ Rhodesia	1972-1980	Rhodesia versus Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) and Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU)
✦ Sri Lanka	1972-present	Sri Lanka versus Tamil New Tigers (TNT)
✦ United States	1973-1975	U.S. government versus Symbionese Liberation Army
✦ Palestine	1973-present	Israel versus Palestine Liberation Front (PLF)
✦ Western Sahara	1975-1991	Morocco versus Western Sahara Freedom Movement (POLISARIO)
✦ East Timor	1975-present	Indonesia versus Revolutionary Front for the Independence of East Timor (FRETELIN)

✦ Cambodia	1978-1998	Vietnam versus Khmer Rouge
✦ Soviet-Afghan War	1979-1988	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (U.S.S.R.) and Government of Afghanistan (GoA) versus Mujahideen
✦ Salvadoran Civil War	1979-1991	U.S. and Government of El Salvador (GoES) versus Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN)
✦ Nicaragua	1980-1990	Frente Sandinista Deliberacion Nacional (FSLN) versus National Guard (GN)/Contras
✦ Peru (Senderista Insurgency)	1980-1995	Peru versus Sendero Luminoso (“The Shining Path”)
✦ India	1980-present	India versus Communist Party of India (Marxist Leninist) (CPI-ML) (People’s War) (PW)
✦ Sri Lanka	1983-present	Sri Lanka government versus Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
✦ Sudan (Conflict Renewed)	1983-present	Sudan versus Southern People’s Liberation Army (SPLA) and Southern People’s Liberation Movement (SPLM)
✦ Uganda	1987-present	Ugandan government versus Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA)
✦ Kashmir	1988-present	India versus Kashmiri Muslim separatists
✦ Somalia	1992-1994	U.S. and United Nations versus warlords and armed factions
✦ Algeria	1992-present	Algeria/National Liberation Front (FLN) versus Islamic Salvation Front (FIS)/Armed Islamic Group (GIA)
✦ Sierra Leone	1993-1997	Sierra Leone versus Revolutionary United Front
✦ Mexico	1994-present	Mexico versus Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN)
✦ Chechnya (Russo-Chechen War)	1994-present	Russia versus Chechen separatists
✦ Peru	1996-1997	Peru versus Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (MRTA)
✦ Nepal	1996-present	Nepal versus Maoists
✦ Afghanistan	2001-present	U.S., NATO and the Government of Afghanistan (GoA) versus Taliban
✦ Iraq	2003-present	U.S. led coalition and Government of Iraq [GoI] versus Jihadists and insurgents

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## APPENDIX C – LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ALN	<i>Alianza Libertadora Nacional</i>
BCP	Bolivian Communist Party
CIC	Counter Intelligence Corp
DA	Democratic Alliance
DLF	Dhofar Liberation Front
DSE	Democratic Army of Greece (Greek: <i>Dimokratikos Stratos Elladas</i> )
EAM	National Liberation Front (Greek: <i>Ethniko Apeleftherotiko Metopo</i> )
EDES	National Democratic Greek League (Greek: <i>Ethnikos Demokratikos Ellenikos Syndesmos</i> )
EKKA	National and Social Liberation (Greek: <i>Ethnike kai Koinonike Apelevtherosis</i> )
ELAS	National Popular Liberation Army (Greek: <i>Ethnikos Laikos Apelevtherotikos Stratos</i> )
ELN	National Liberation Army of Bolivia (Spanish: <i>Ejército de Liberación Nacional de Bolivia</i> )
GoG	Government of Greece
GNA	Greek National Army
JUSMAG	United States Military Assistance Group
JUSMAPG	Joint United States Military Advisory and Planning Group
KCA	Kikuyu Central Association
KKE	Greek Communist Party (Greek: <i>Kommounistiko Komma Ellados</i> )
MCP	Malayan Communist Party
MPAJA	Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army

MPABA	Malayan People's Anti-British Army
MPLA	Malayan People's Liberation Army
MRLA	Malayan Race's Liberation Army
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
PDK	Temporary Democratic Government
PDRY	People's Democratic Republic of Yemen
PFLO	Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman
PFLOAG	People's Front for the Liberation of the Oman and the Arabian Gulf
SAF	Sultan's Armed Forces (Oman)
SAS	Special Air Service (British)
SNOF	Slavomacedonian Liberating Front
SOAF	Sultan of Oman's Air Force
UNRRA	United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration

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